128 624 state might be described as an ordered anarchy. Likewise they lack law, if we understand by this term judgements delivered by an independent and impartial authority which has, also, power to enforce its decisions. There are signs that certain changes were taking place in this respect, and at the end of the chapter on the political system we describe the emergence of prophets, persons in whom dwell the spirits of Sky-gods, and we suggest that in them we may perceive the beginnings of political development. Leopard-skin chiefs and prophets are the only ritual specialists who, in our opinion, have any political importance.

128 613 614 After an examination of the political structure we describe the lineage system and discuss the relation between the two. Nuer lineages are agnatic, i.e. they consist of persons who trace their descent exclusively through males to a common ancestor. The clan is the largest group of lineages which is definable by reference to rules of exogamy, though agnatic relationship is recognized between several clans. A clan is segmented into lineages, which are diverging branches of descent from a common ancestor. We call the largest segments into which a clan is divided its 'maximal lineages', the segments of a maximal lineage its 'major lineages', the segments of a major lineage its 'minor lineages', and the segments of a minor lineage its 'minimal lineages'. The minimal lineage is the one to which a man usually refers when asked what is his lineage. A lineage is thus a group of agnates, dead or alive, between whom kinship can be traced genealogically, and a clan is an exogamous system of lineages. These lineage groups differ from political groups in that the relationship of their members to one another is based on descent and not on residence, for lineages are dispersed and do not compose exclusive local communities, and, also, in that lineage values often operate in a different range of situations from political values.

128 561 After discussing the lineage system in its relation to territorial segmentation we describe briefly the age-set system. The adult male population falls into stratified groups based on age, and we call these groups 'age-sets'. The members of each set become such by initiation and they remain in it till death. The sets do not form a cycle, but a progressive system, the junior set

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619 often co-ordination of sets between adjacent tribes. A single
clan is sometimes dominant in more than one tribal area, domi-
● [614] nant clans are linked in a general clan system, and the principal
clans are found in every part of Nuerland. We have noted
how in the days of ivory trading Gaajak tribesmen journeyed
through the territories of other tribes as far as the Zeraf.

619 The limits of the tribe are therefore not the limits of social
intercourse, and there are many ties between persons of one
571 tribe and persons of another tribe. Through association with
the clan system and by proximity the people of one tribe may
consider themselves nearer to a second than to a third. Thus the
three Eastern Jikany tribes feel a vague unity in relation to the
Lou, and so do the Bor and Rengyan in relation to the Leek.
But, also, individuals, and through individuals kinship groups
and even a village, have a circuit of social relationships that
cut across tribal divisions, so that a traveller who crosses the
border of his tribe can always establish some links with in-
dividuals of the tribe he visits in virtue of which he will receive
hospitality and protection. If he is wronged, his host, and not he,
is involved in legal action. However, there is a kind of inter-
national law, in the recognition of conventions in certain matters,
beyond political boundaries and the limits of formal law. Thus,
[582] though it is considered more risky to marry outside the tribe
than within it, since divorce may prove more detrimental in
that the return of bride-wealth is less certain, the rules of
marriage are acknowledged on both sides and it would be con-
sidered improper to take advantage of political cleavage to break
them. Tribes are thus politically exclusive groups, but they are
not coterminous with an individual's sphere of social relations,
though this sphere tends to follow the lines of political cleavage,
in the same way as a man's district tends to be equated to his
tribal segment. The relation between political structure and
general social relations is discussed in the chapters that follow.
Here we may note that it is desirable to distinguish between
(1) political distance in the sense of structural distance between
segments of a tribe, the largest political unit, and between tribes
in a system of political relations; (2) general structural distance
in the sense of non-political distance between various social
groups in the Nuer-speaking community—non-political struc-

remark only that there is no constituted authority within each set, all members being of equal status, and that, whilst members of junior sets respect those of senior sets, the authority of older men is personal, very indefinite, and based on analogy with domestic relations within the family. Behaviour between individuals is influenced by the distance between them in the age-set system, but age-sets are not a political institution in the sense of the system having an administrative, military, or judicial organization. 561

Age by itself does not give a man social position. He must have other qualifications as well. Those elders with most influence are the *gaat twot*, the children of bulls. Such a man is called a *tut*, bull, and in strict usage this is equivalent to *dil*, tribal aristocrat. As will be fully explained in Chapter V a *dil* is a member of the dominant clan in each tribe and, in virtue of his membership, has within that tribe a slightly superior social position. This clan is not a ruling class and the enhanced prestige of its members is very indefinite. The clan system has no hereditary leadership; a senior lineage does not rank higher than others; there is no 'father of the clan'; and there is no 'council of clan elders'. *Tut* is also used in a wider sense to refer to men of social position who do not belong to the dominant clan but to other lineages which have long been domiciled in the tribe. A *tut* in this rather wide sense of 'man of good standing', or 'social leader', is usually a scion of an important lineage, the head of his own family, and master of his homestead and herd. He is generally also the eldest surviving son of his father's family and, therefore, head also of the joint family, the master of the hamlet. If he is to gain a social reputation he must also possess sufficient cows to be able to entertain guests and to attract young kinsmen to reside in his byre. Round such a man's homestead are clustered the homesteads of his brothers and married sons and, often enough, the homesteads of his sisters' husbands and daughters' husbands. To be a social leader, whose opinion is readily agreed to, he must also be a man of character and ability. 554 [614]

The authority of a *gat twot*, or *tut wec*, 'bull of the camp', as he is often called, is never formalized. He has no defined status, powers, or sphere of leadership. Lineage, age, seniority in the

CHAPTER V

THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

I

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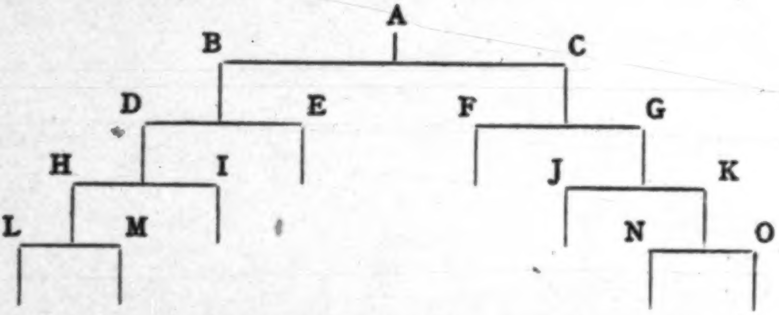
MANY characteristics of Nuer lineages and clans belong to the study of kinship which we hope to make in a subsequent volume. Here only those characters which are strictly relevant to the territorial system are discussed. We begin, however, by a formal definition of clan, lineage, and kin. A Nuer clan is the largest group of agnates who trace their descent from a common ancestor and between whom marriage is forbidden and sexual relations considered incestuous. It is not merely an undifferentiated group of persons who recognize their common agnatic kinship, as are some African clans, but is a highly segmented genealogical structure. We refer to these genealogical segments of a clan as its lineages. The relationship of any member of a lineage to any other member of it can be exactly stated in genealogical terms and, therefore, also his relationship to members of other lineages of the same clan can be traced, since the relationship of one lineage to another is genealogically known. A clan is a system of lineages and a lineage is a genealogical segment of a clan. One might speak of the whole clan as a lineage, but we prefer to speak of lineages as segments of it and to define them as such. Alternatively one may speak of a lineage as an agnatic group the members of which are genealogically linked, and of a clan as a system of such groups, the system being, among the Nuer, a genealogical system. In the diagram on p. 193 clan A is segmented into maximal lineages B and C and these bifurcate into major lineages D, E, F, and G. Minor lineages H, I, J, and K are segments of major lineages D and G, and L, M, N, and O are minimal lineages which are segments of H and K. It was found that words to describe four stages of lineage segmentation are sufficient when speaking of even the largest clans. The commonest Nuer word for a lineage is *thok dwiel* and the smallest genealogical unit they describe as a *thok dwiel* has a time depth of from three to five generations from living persons. A whole clan is thus a genealogical

structure, and the letters in the diagram represent persons from 614
whom the clan and its segments trace their descent and from
whom they often take their names. There must be at least 613
twenty such clans in Nuerland, without taking into account
numerous small lineages of Dinka origin.



A lineage in the sense in which we generally employ this word is a group of living agnates, descended from the founder of that particular line. Logically it also includes dead persons descended from the founder—and we sometimes use the word to include them also—but these dead persons are only significant in that their genealogical position explains the relationships between the living. It is clear from the context whether the word is used in a more or less inclusive sense.

Clans and lineages have names, possess various ritual symbols, and observe certain reciprocal ceremonial relations. They have spear-names which are shouted out at ceremonies, honorific titles by which people are sometimes addressed, totemic and other mystical affiliations, and ceremonial status towards one another.

Agnatic kinship between lineages is called *buth*. *Buth* is 611
always an agnatic relationship between groups of persons, and
only between persons in virtue of their membership of groups.
Buth agnation is to be distinguished from kinship in the sense
of relationship between persons, e.g. between a man and his
father's brother and mother's brother. Cognation in this sense
the Nuer call *mar*. Any person to whom a man can trace any
genealogical link, whether through males or females, is *mar* to
him. A man's *mar* are consequently all his father's kin and all 611
his mother's kin, and we call this cognatic category his kindred. 612

611 In normal usage the word refers to close relatives only. Therefore, as *mar* includes close agnates, the word *buth* is used only in 612 reference to distant agnates, between whom and the speaker there is lineage cleavage. There is *buth* relationship between lineages of the same clan and also between related clans which have the same ancestor but do not compose an exogamous unit. A Dinka can be given *buth* relationship to a Nuer lineage by being adopted into a collateral lineage. We thus formally distinguish between the lineage system, which is a system of agnatic groups, and the kinship system, which is a system of categories of relationship to any individual; and we speak of these relationships as a man's paternal kin and his maternal kin, and both together as his kindred.

613 Political and lineage groups are not identical, but they have a certain correspondence and often bear the same name, for a 619 tribal area and its divisions are often called after the clans and lineages which are supposed to have first occupied them. This makes their inter-relation a very difficult problem to investigate and has led to some confusion in writings on the Nuer. Thus Gaawar is the name of a tribal area, of the tribesmen who inhabit it, and of the members of a clan which have in that area a socially dominant status. Likewise Gaajok and Gaajak are names of territories, tribes, and lineages. To clarify description clan and lineage names are therefore printed in small capitals. Hence, when we say that a man is a Gaawar we mean that he is a Gaawar tribesman, a man who resides in Gaawar country, whereas when we say that he is a GAAWAR we mean that he is a member of the GAAWAR clan, a descendant in the male line from War, the founder of the dominant clan in Gaawar country.

II

613 Three trees of clan descent are presented in the following 614 section in a form conventional to us, and which would also commend itself to Nuer, who sometimes speak of a lineage as *kar*, a branch, as illustrations of the way in which lineages split up, each being a branch of a larger one. The JINACA are the dominant clan in the Lou and Rengyan tribes, the GATGANKIIR are the dominant clan in the Jikany tribes, and the (GAA)THIANG

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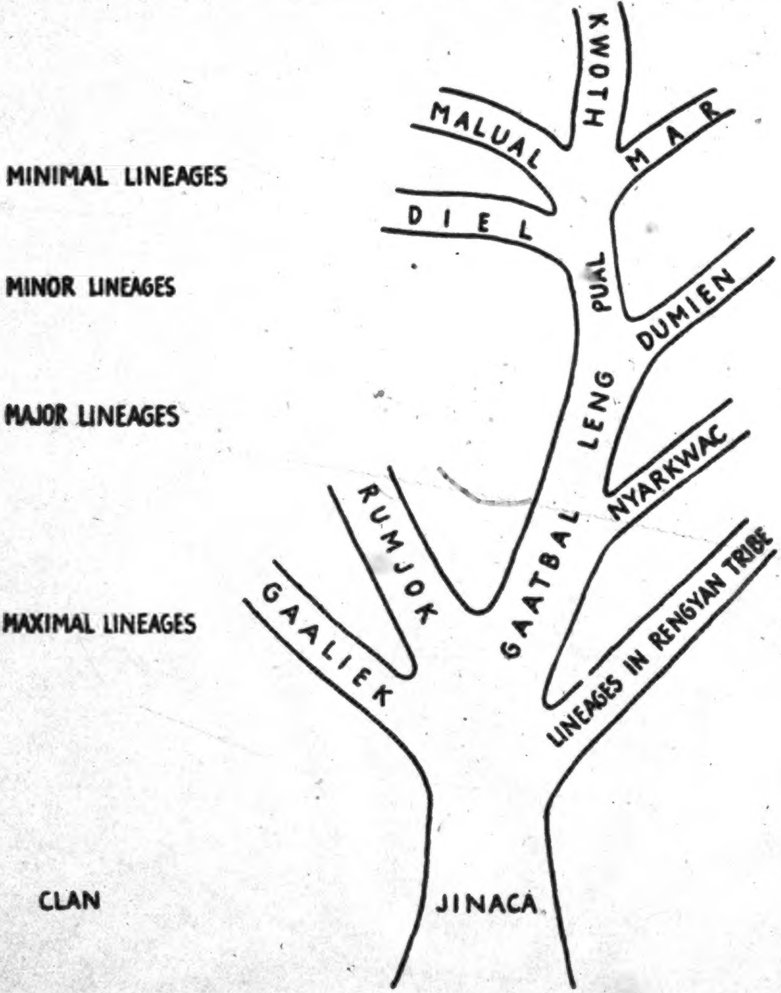
are the dominant clan in the Thiang tribe. Only one line of descent is shown from the roots to the twigs, from the clan ancestor to the minimal lineages, but it is indicated where the other main branches and boughs, the other maximal, major, and minor lineages leave the stem.

III

We have defined lineage and clan and give some examples of them in diagrams. In this section we note some characteristics of both which are germane to our inquiry. It may at once be said that it is not easy to discover a Nuer's clan, for a clan is not to Nuer an abstraction and there is no word in their language that can be translated 'clan' in ours. One may obtain the name of a man's clan by asking him who was his 'ancestor of yore' or his 'first ancestor' (*gwandong*) or what are his 'seeds' (*kwai*), but it is only when one already knows the clans and their lineages and their various ritual symbols, as the Nuer does, that one can easily place a man's clan through his lineage or by his spear-name and honorific salutation, for Nuer speak fluently in terms of lineages. A lineage is *thok mac*, the hearth, or *thok dwiel*, the entrance to the hut, or one may speak of *kar*, a branch. *Thok dwiel* is the commonest expression to denote a line of agnatic descent in those situations when genealogical exactness and precision are relevant, but in normal everyday usage Nuer employ the word *cieng*, as will be explained later. The clan has itself a position analogous to that of a lineage in the clan system, and it is significant to the Nuer not so much as a unique group as a segment in a system of groups, for it acquires its singularity only as part of a system.

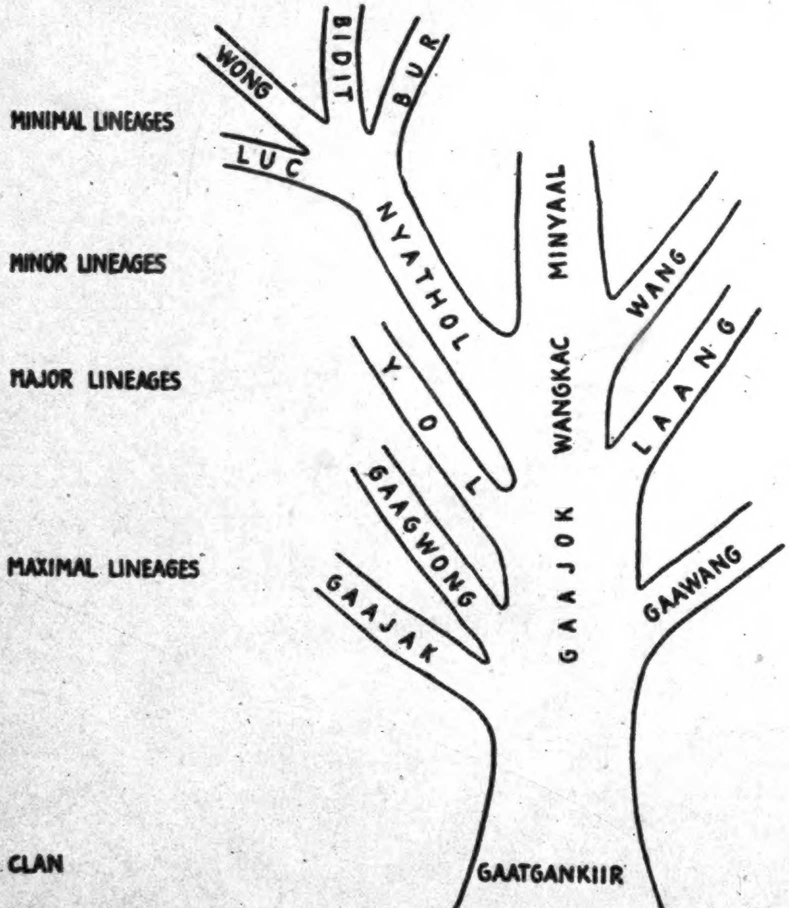
A lineage is a relative term, since its range of reference depends on the particular person who is selected as the point of departure in tracing descent. Thus, if we were to begin with a father, the *thok dwiel* would include only sons and daughters, but if we were to take a grandfather as our point of departure, it would include all his sons and daughters and the children of his sons. A larger and larger number of agnates would be included the higher up in the line of ascent we were to take the point of departure for counting descendants. It might be maintained that the smallest possible lineage are the sons and daughters of

613 one man, but Nuer do not refer to them as a *thok dwiel*. They
614 are, with their father and their mother, a family and household.
One cannot say definitely how far up a line of ascent Nuer will go in selecting the apex of a minimal lineage. They may go back only two steps, to the grandfather, making in all three generations of agnates, but a minimal lineage of four or five generations is more usual. Apart from Nuer usage, we consider it important to define lineages as groups with a depth of at least three generations, since they are then distinct structural


KWOTH
MALUAL
MAR
MINIMAL LINEAGES
DIEL
PUAL
MINOR LINEAGES
DUMIEN
LENG
MAJOR LINEAGES
NYARKWAC
RUMJOK
GAATBAL
GAALIEK
LINEAGES IN RENGYAN TRIBE
MAXIMAL LINEAGES
CLAN
JINACA

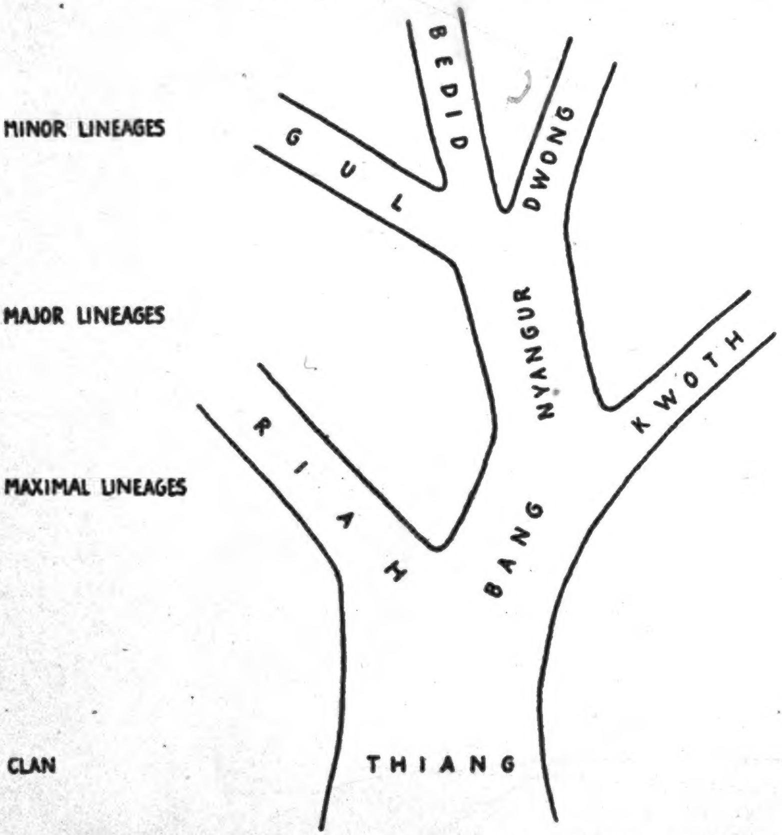
segments in a system of such segments and not easily confused with domestic groups.

The Nuer clan, being thus highly segmented, has many of the characteristics which we have found in tribal structure. Its


MINIMAL LINEAGES
MINOR LINEAGES
MAJOR LINEAGES
MAXIMAL LINEAGES
CLAN
WONG
BIDIT
BUR
LUC
NYATHOL
MINYAAL
WANG
YOL
WANGKAC
LAANG
GAAGWONG
GAAJOK
GAAJAK
GAAWANG
GAATGANKIIR

lineages are distinct groups only in relation to each other. Thus, in the diagram on p. 193, M is a group only in opposition to L, H is a group only in opposition to I, D is a group only in opposition to E, and so on. There is always fusion of collateral lineages of the same branch in relation to a collateral branch, e.g. in the diagram, L and M are a single minor lineage, H, in opposition to I, and not separate lineages; and D and E are a

613 614 single maximal lineage, B, in opposition to C, and not separate lineages. Hence two lineages which are equal and opposite are composite in relation to a third, so that a man is a member of a lineage in relation to a certain group and not a member of it in relation to a different group. Lineage values are thus essentially relative like tribal values, and we suggest later that the processes of lineage segmentation and political segmentation are to some extent co-ordinate.


MINOR LINEAGES
MAJOR LINEAGES
MAXIMAL LINEAGES
CLAN
GUL
BEDID
DWONG
NYANGUR
KWOTH
RIAH
BANG
THIANG

613 614 173 Since humans propagate themselves, the clans might be supposed to be further and further removed from their founder, and the living representatives of a clan to become wider and wider separated in lineage structure. However, we do not believe that this is the case. In theory every man is a potential founder of a lineage, but, in fact, lineages spring from very few

names. The others, for one reason or another, drop out, so that 613
only certain lines of descent are remembered. Also, in those 614
lines that persist names drop out of the steps in ascent to the
founder of the clan, so that the distance in generations from 173
the founder of a clan to the present day remain fairly constant. We have suggested in our discussion on Nuer time-reckoning that there is always this difference between a true genealogy and a genealogy which Nuer deem to be true. The evidence for the assertion depends partly on a comparative study of East African genealogies and partly on a study of Nuer genealogies. We mention some of the reasons, arising from reflections on Nuer genealogies, that have led us to this conclusion, since the validity of some arguments, developed later in the chapter, depends on their acceptance.

(1) All the main clans have about ten to twelve generations from the present day to the ancestors who gave rise to them. There is no reason to suppose that the Nuer came into existence ten to twelve generations ago. (2) When a Nuer is asked his lineage he gives it by reference to an ancestor, the founder of his minimal lineage, who is from three to six, generally four to five, steps in ascent from the present day. These steps are certain and agreed upon. This is understandable, since five steps represent a man, his father, his grandfather, and his grandfather's father and grandfather, and since a man instructs his children in the names of his immediate forbears. It is evident that after five or six generations the names of ancestors become lost. Young men often do not know them, and there is frequent confusion and disagreement among older persons. The founder of the minor lineage must be placed somewhere between the founder of the minimal lineage and the founder of the major lineage; the founder of the major lineage must be placed somewhere between the founder of the minor lineage and the founder of the maximal lineage; and the founder of the maximal lineage must be placed somewhere between the founder of the major lineage and the founder of the clan. The names of these founders of lineage-branches must go into the line of ascent somewhere, and in a definite order, because they are significant points of reference. It is immaterial whether other names go in or not, and their order is without significance. Consequently some informants put them in and some leave them out, and some put them in one order and others in a different order. It is evident, moreover, that since the minimal lineage consists of four or five actual steps in ascent, there has been telescoping of the agnatic

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line from the founder of the minimal lineage further up the line of ascent to the founder of the clan, for the founder of the minimal lineage was himself the extremity of another minimal lineage which has, by increase in generations, become the minor lineage, and so on. Consequently, even were the supposed founder of the clan the real founder of it, there ought to be at least sixteen steps from him to the present day, assuming that minimal lineages have always been of the same character as at the present time. The length of each fork in the tree of descent ought logically to be of equal length, whereas the twig, so to speak, is longer than the branch or stem from which it springs. (3) There is another way in which only significant ancestors, i.e. ancestors who form the apex of a triangle of descent, are denoted in genealogical trees, and irrelevant ancestors, i.e. ancestors who do not give their name to a group of descendants, are obscured and finally forgotten. Not only do links drop out of the direct line of descent, but also collateral lines merge. It is clear from a study of Nuer genealogies that the descendants of one or two brothers become numerous and dominant, that the descendants of others die out, and that the descendants of yet others are relatively few and weak and attach themselves, as is explained in later sections, by participation in local and corporate life, to a stronger and dominant collateral line. They become assimilated to this line in ordinary lineage reference and eventually are grafted on to it by misplacement of their founder, who becomes a son instead of a brother of its founder. The merging of collateral lines higher up a lineage seems to be common, and to be more frequent and necessary the higher up one proceeds. It is necessary because, as will be seen later, the lineage system provides one of the principles of political organization.

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The structural form of clans remains constant, while actual lineages at any point in time are highly dynamic, creating new bifurcations and merging old ones. They may therefore be presented as trees. But a presentation more useful for sociological analysis is in terms of structural distance, for lineages are groups of living agnates, and the distance between them varies with their relative positions in clan structure. Thus, in the diagram below, the line A–B represents the JINACA clan. The agnatic distance between the MAR minimal lineage and other lineages of the same clan is represented both on the line A–B and also in its time depth by their point of convergence in ascent on the line B–C. The wider the range of agnation specified the further back their point of convergence, so that

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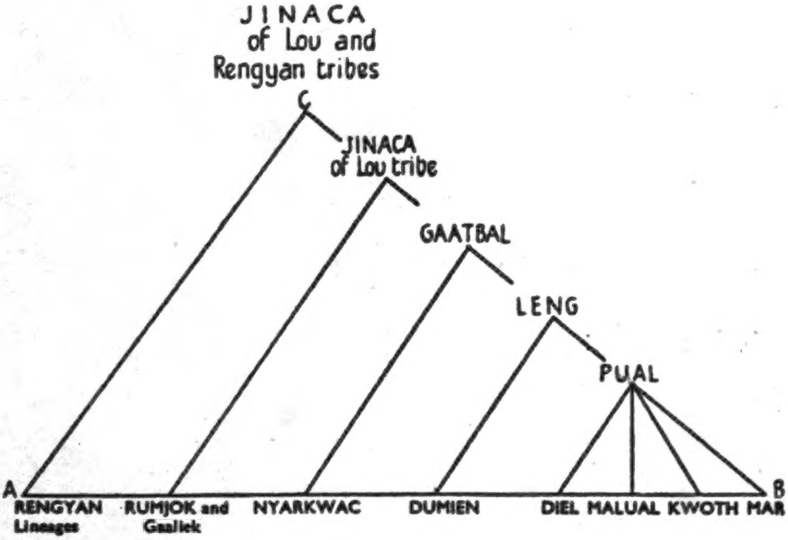
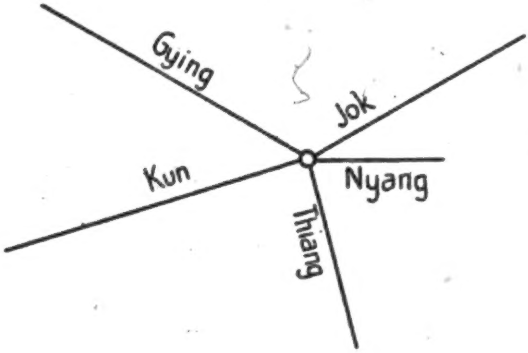
the depth of a lineage (the vertical line of ascent) is always in proportion to its width (the base line representing living lineage groups in the clan system).

A Nuer clan, therefore, is a system of lineages, the relationship of each lineage to every other lineage being marked in its structure by a point of reference in ascent. The distance to this point is what we call the time depth of a lineage. In theory the genealogical relationship between any two clansmen can be traced through this point, and Nuer can actually trace it if they take the trouble. However, they do not consider it necessary to know the exact genealogical relationship between persons who are known to be distantly related by membership of their respective lineages. Thus it is sufficient for a man of the GAATBAL lineage to know that another man is of the GAALIEK lineage without his having to know the man's exact descent, for these two lineages stand to one another in a certain structural relationship, and therefore the two men stand to one another at that distance. Nuer are conversant up to a point—generally up to the founders of their minimal and minor lineages—with the full range of their genealogical relationships. Beyond this point they reckon kinship in terms of lineages. It is necessary


JINACA of Lou and Rengyan tribes
C
JINACA of Lou tribe
GAATBAL
LENG
PUAL
A
B
RENGYAN Lineages
RUMJOK and Gaaliek
NYARKWAC
DUMIEN
DIEL
MALUAL
KWOTH
MAR

613 614 for a Nuer to know not only that a man is a fellow clansman, but also to know what lineage he belongs to, in deciding questions of exogamy and ceremonial. The relationship between a lineage and others of the same clan is not an equal relationship, for lineages are structurally differentiated units which stand to one another at different and exact structural distances.



It is interesting to note how the Nuer themselves figure a lineage system. When illustrating on the ground a number of related lineages they do not present them the way we figure them in this chapter as a series of bifurcations of descent, as a tree of descent, or as a series of triangles of ascent, but as a number of lines running at angles from a common point. Thus in Western Nuerland a man illustrated some of the GAATGANKIIR lineages, using the names of their founders, by drawing the figure above on the ground. This representation and Nuer comments on it show several significant facts about the way in which Nuer see the system. They see it primarily as actual relations between groups of kinsmen within local communities rather than as a tree of descent, for the persons after whom the lineages are called do not all proceed from a single individual. Jok, Thiang, and Kun are three sons of Kir and founders of the maximal lineages GAAJOK, GAAJAK, and GAAGWONG of the GAATGANKIIR clan. Thiang and Kun are shown next to each other because jointly they form the lineage framework of the Gaajak tribe. The Gying lineage does not belong to the GAATGANKIIR clan, but it is shown next to Kun because of the proximity of the Reng section, of which it forms part, to the

Gaagwong section. Nyang is shown as a short line at the side 613
of Jok because, although the lineage which springs from him 614
belongs to the group of lineages founded by Thiang, they live in the Gaagwang tribe together with a lineage descended from Jok, and the Gaagwang tribe is closely associated with the Gaajok tribe. The Nuer, outside certain ritual situations, evaluate clans and lineages in terms of their local relations. Herein lies the importance of these groups for this study.

IV

Nuer lineages are not corporate, localized, communities, 613
though they are frequently associated with territorial units, and 621
those members of a lineage who live in an area associated with it see themselves as a residential group, and the value, or concept, of lineage thus functions through the political system. Every Nuer village is associated with a lineage, and, though the members of it often constitute only a small proportion of the village population, the village community is identified with them in such a way that we may speak of it as an aggregate of persons clustered around an agnatic nucleus. The aggregate is linguistically identified with the nucleus by the common designation of the village community by the name of the lineage. It is only in reference to rules of exogamy, certain ritual activities, and to a very limited extent to responsibility for homicide, that one needs to regard lineages as completely autonomous groups. In social life generally they function within local communities, of all sizes from the village to the tribe, and as part of them.

A Nuer rarely talks about his lineage as distinct from his community, and in contrast to other lineages which form part of it, outside a ceremonial context. I have watched a Nuer who knew precisely what I wanted, trying on my behalf to discover from a stranger the name of his lineage. He often found great initial difficulty in making the man understand the information required of him, for Nuer think generally in terms of local divisions and of the relations between them, and an attempt to discover lineage affiliations apart from their community relations, and outside a ceremonial context, generally led to misunderstanding in the opening stages of an inquiry.

613 and become attached to larger and stronger lineages by processes
621 which we will explain later.

Nevertheless, a Nuer lineage never entirely merges into
613 another clan. There are always certain ritual observances
621 which cannot be shared. If intermarriage creates community
614 ties between two lineages, it likewise keeps them distinct, since
[582] one may only marry those who are not of one's agnatic group, and even if two lineages intermarry to such an extent that cognatic relationship is a bar to further marriage between them, then each may marry into collateral lineages of the other's clan and children of their daughters. If a mythological link forges a closer union between them it is also a record of their different lines of descent, explaining, indeed, how people of divergent descent are living together amicably. Thus a lineage, however far removed from its homeland and however widely separated from its kinsfolk, never becomes entirely absorbed or loses its ritual heritage. A lineage can only merge with a collateral lineage of the same clan.

But though lineages maintain their autonomy, the lineage value only operates in the restricted field of ceremonial and is, therefore, only occasionally a determinant of behaviour. Community values are those which constantly direct behaviour, and these operate in a different set of social situations to lineage values. While lineage values control ceremonial relations between groups of agnates, community values control political relations between groups of people living in separate villages, tribal sections, and tribes. The two kinds of value control distinct planes of social life.

It is, as we explain in the following sections, only the close association between a tribe and its dominant clan, and lineages in one way or another related to this dominant clan, that makes the agnatic principle in lineage structure politically important, for these lineages function as values in the political system which gives them corporate substance.

VI

614 In spite of so much dispersion and admixture of clans there is
in every tribe a definite relation between its political structure
619 and the clan system, for in each tribe a clan, or a maximal lineage

● 614 619 of a clan, is associated with the political group in which it occupies a dominant position among the other agnatic groups that live in it. Moreover, each of its segments tends to be associated with a segment of the tribe in such a way that there is a correspondence, and often linguistic identification, between the parts of a clan and the parts of a tribe. Thus, if we compare the diagram on p. 144[1] with that on p. 193[1] and suppose clan A to be the dominant clan in tribe B, then maximal lineages B and C correspond to primary sections X and Y, major lineages D and E correspond to secondary sections X^1 and X^2, major lineages F and G correspond to secondary sections Y^1 and Y^2, and minor lineages J and K correspond to tertiary sections Z^1 and Z^2. Minimal lineages are associated with villages composing the tertiary sections. It is for this reason that we have spoken of the dominant clan as forming a framework on which the political system of the tribe is built up through a complex series of kinship links. The system of lineages of the dominant clan is a conceptual skeleton on which the local communities are built up into an organization of related parts, or, as we would prefer to state it, a system of values linking tribal segments and providing the idiom in which their relations can be expressed and directed.

614 619 565 The JINACA of Lou country lived originally with their kinsmen the JINACA of Rengyan country to the west of the Nile, but they split off from them and, having crossed the Nile, conquered present-day Lou country. Here they were the first occupants, or at any rate the strongest element among the first occupants. Probably JINACA men frequently crossed the Nile to join their kinsmen to the east and amalgamated with them. Such persons would at once be members of the dominant clan and be spoken of as *diel*, members of the aristocratic group of lineages. But members of other clans which settled in Lou country during or after the occupation were classed as strangers (*rul*). In the same manner those lineages of the GAATGANKIIR clan who crossed the Nile and settled to the north of the Sobat held there a privileged position among other Nuer who joined them.

Every Nuer tribe has in this way its *diel*, its superior clan, though in the case of some tribes we are not certain of the correct designation of these clans. Among the Gaawar they are the GAAWAR, among the Thiang the (GAA)THIANG, among the Leek the GAATBOL, among the Wot, and probably also among the Ror, the

[1] [See cat. 116 — Analyst]

JIDIET, and among the Begh the JIKOI, &c. Where the correct clan 614 name is unknown one may refer to these dominant elements as the aristocrats (*diel*) or the 'bulls' (*tut*) of such-and-such a tribe, as the 619 Nuer themselves frequently do, e.g. a *dil* or *tut* Bura, an aristocrat 565 of the Bor tribe, *dil* or *tut* Wotni, an aristocrat of the Wot tribe, *dil* or *tut* Beeka, an aristocrat of the Beegh tribe, *dil* or *tut* Laka, an aristocrat of the Lak tribe, &c. One may always speak of an aristocratic clan or lineage by its proper name or by reference to the tribe in which it has a privileged position, e.g. GAATNACA, children of Nac, or *diel* Looka, aristocrats of the Lou tribe, GAATBOL, children of Bul, or *diel* Leegni, aristocrats of the Leek tribe.

There are four essential points to be remembered about these aristocratic clans. (1) Not every clan has superior status in a tribe. Some clans, e.g. the JIMEM and the JAKAR, have no *wec*, no local community, as the Nuer say. Others have village-sites where they have resided for a long time and which are called after them, but they are not *diel* in the tribe where these sites are found. Many are like cuttings which have lost all contact with the parent stem, but these may at once be designated Dinka lineages that have sprung from immigrants, whose descendants sometimes know the Dinka country of their origin but do not know their position in its system of lineages. Consequently they cannot trace ascent for as many generations as true Nuer, and their lineages are narrower in range and territorially more restricted. One finds them in little local pockets in a single tribe, whereas the Nuer clans are distributed throughout many tribes.

(2) Not every member of a Nuer clan lives in the tribe where it has superior status, for most clans are found in all parts of Nuerland. Most JINACA live in Lou and Rengyan tribal areas, where they are *diel*, but many are also found among the Eastern Jikany tribes and elsewhere. Likewise, most GAAWAR live in Gaawar country, but they are also found in most, perhaps all, Nuer tribes. Tribes are territorial groups with an unbroken social extension, whereas clans are kinship groups dispersed far and wide. Consequently a tribe is a community and can have corporate functions, but a clan is never a community and can never act corporately. The Lou tribe unite for war. The JINACA never unite. Also a man can change his tribe by changing his place of residence, but he can never change his clan. A

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Lou man who goes to live in Gaawar country becomes a Gaawar man. A JINACA man remains a NAC wherever he lives.

(3) A clan is, as we have earlier emphasized, not numerically preponderant in the tribe where it is dominant, e.g. the JINACA are only a small minority in the Lou tribe and the GAAJOK lineage are only a small minority in the Gaajok tribe.

(4) A man is a *dil*, aristocrat, only in the one tribe where his clan has superior status. Thus a *dil Leegni*, an aristocrat of the Leek tribe, is an aristocrat there and nowhere else. If he goes to live in Bul country or in one of the Jikany countries he is no longer a *dil* but a *rul*, stranger. In the same way a member of the JINACA is a *dil* in Lou country, but if he goes, as many of his clan do, to reside in Gaajok country, he is not a *dil* there but a stranger, *rul*. The JINACA are *diel* Looka, but the GAAJOK are *diel* Gaajok. The status of *diel* is dependent on residence on land owned by their clan. The only exception to this statement is to be found in such cases where a clan is dominant in two or more tribes, e.g. the JINACA in Lou and Rengyan and the GAATGANKIIR in the Jikany countries to the west and to the east of the Bahr el Jebel. If a man of the JINACA moves from Rengyan to Lou he still remains a *dil*, because both countries belong to his clan. Likewise a man of the GAAJOK lineage of the GAATGANKIIR can move from Gaajok to Gaagwang, or Gaajak, country, on either side of the Nile, and still remain a *dil*, for various lineages of his clan are dominant in all these tribes.

Like most words which denote sociological status, *dil* is used by Nuer in various contexts with various meanings. In this book it is used with the precise meaning given to it in the preceding paragraphs. It is, however, permissible to use the word to denote a true member of any lineage, whether dominant in the tribe or not. For example, the JUAK lineage of the Leek tribe are of Dinka origin and are not *diel Leegni*, but a man who dwells among them can obviously be either a *dil Juaka*, a true member of the JUAK lineage, or a person who has attached himself to them for some reason or other. In the same manner one may speak of a *dil* JIMEM, although there is no tribe in which the JIMEM have the status of *diel*, for a man may be a true member of the clan or a Dinka who has attached himself to it. Also a member of the JINACA who leaves Lou and settles in Gaajok still remains a *gat dila Looka*, a child of Lou aristocracy, and will call himself such, meaning that when he is in Lou country he is an aristocrat.

,1: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1940
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

The words '*tut*' or '*gat twot*', son of a bull, are used in the same manner as '*dil*' and '*gat dila*'. Here again a man may be a *tut* of his lineage, in contrast to accretions of strangers and Dinka who live in the district associated with it, without being a *tut* of the tribe of which that district forms part, e.g. a man may be a *tut* of the Jaajoah secondary section of the Lou tribe without being a *tut Looka*, because the aristocratic clan of the whole of Lou country are the JINACA, and the JAAJOAH are not members of this clan. In other words a man may call himself a *tut* of the Jaajoah to emphasize that he is a JAAJOAH and not merely a Jaajoah, but he does not thereby imply that he is a *tut Looka*. In a still more general sense *tut* may, as we have noted, merely mean a paterfamilias or even a male person. One must judge from the context how the expression should be translated. In this book we use the words *tut* or *gat twot* in the sense, defined on pp. 179-80,^a^ of an elder, and we use the word *dil* to refer to a tribal aristocrat. 614 619 565

It is difficult to find an English word that adequately describes the social position of *diel* in a tribe. We have called them aristocrats, but do not wish to imply that Nuer regard them as of superior rank, for, as we have emphatically declared, the idea of a man lording it over others is repugnant to them. On the whole—we will qualify the statement later—the *diel* have prestige rather than rank and influence rather than power. If you are a *dil* of the tribe in which you live you are more than a simple tribesman. You are one of the owners of the country, its village sites, its pastures, its fishing pools and wells. Other people live there in virtue of marriage into your clan, adoption into your lineage, or of some other social tie. You are a leader of the tribe and the spear-name of your clan is invoked when the tribe goes to war. Wherever there is a *dil* in a village, the village clusters around him as a herd of cattle clusters around its bull. 619 565 554

I have described the position of *diel* as I judged it to be among the Lou tribe. I had the impression that to the west of the Nile their status was less pronounced, whereas among the Eastern Jikany tribes, on the periphery of Nuer expansion, it was more emphasized. In the Karlual area of the Leek tribe, the only part of western Nuerland I know more than superficially, the aristocratic prestige of a *dil* is recognized, but there are clans of strangers so well and long entrenched in the districts and villages in which they are found to-day that a *dil* has no legal privilege.

a [See cat. 116 — Analyst]

alluding to him as such in ordinary social life, for it is in rare 602
situations that his being other than an aristocrat is relevant: to 609
some extent in payment of blood-cattle, in questions of exogamy,
and at sacrifices and feasts. A stranger who has made his home 554
with aristocrats is treated as a social equal and regards himself as such. People do not call him a *rul*, for he is a member of their community. They may even refer to him as a *dil* out of politeness. In the same way people do not refer to an adopted Dinka as '*Jaang*'; for he is by adoption a brother of aristocrats or of Nuer of other lineages. One would not ordinarily speak of unadopted Dinka residents as '*Jaang*', but as '*rul*'. Just as strangers tend to be linguistically assimilated to aristocrats, so Dinka tend to be assimilated to strangers, and people speak only of unconquered Dinka of Dinkaland by the contemptuous expression '*Jaang*'. Nuer do not make distinctions of status between people who live with them, share their fights, partake of their hospitality, and are members of their community against other communities. Community of living overrides differentiation of descent.

We again emphasize that the designations 'aristocrat', 'stranger', and 'Dinka' in a Nuer tribe are relative terms, being defined by the relations of persons in the social structure in specific situations of social life. A man is a stranger, or Dinka, in reference to a few, mainly ritual, situations, but is not indicated as such on other occasions; and a man is a stranger or Dinka in relation to members of a social group, but is not considered by them to have a differentiated status in relation to another group. A stranger is a stranger to you, your stranger, but is one of you *vis-à-vis* other people. A Dinka is a Dinka to you, your Dinka, but he is your brother *vis-à-vis* other people. In political structure all members of a segment are essentially undifferentiated in its relation to other segments.

How can it be explained that among a people so democratic 619
in sentiment and so ready to express it in violence a clan is
given superior status in each tribe? We believe that the facts 614●
we have recorded provide an answer in terms of tribal structure. 565
Many Nuer tribes are large in area and population—some of them very large—and they are more than territorial expressions, for we have shown that they have a complex segmentary structure which the Nuer themselves see as a system. As there are no

619 tribal chiefs and councils, or any other form of tribal government,
we have to seek elsewhere for the organizing principle
● 614 within the structure which gives it conceptual consistency and
565 a certain measure of actual cohesion, and we find it in aristocratic
status. In the absence of political institutions providing central administration in a tribe and co-ordinating its segments, it is the system of lineages of its dominant clan which gives it structural distinctness and unity by the association of lineage values, within a common agnatic structure, with the segments of a territorial system. In the absence of a chief or king, who might symbolize a tribe, its unity is expressed in the idiom of lineage and clan affiliation.

XII

619 In the Kir myth not only are the ancestors of important
lineages, and, through them, the lineages and the territorial
614 segments in which they are incorporated brought into relationship,
173 but the ancestors of clans, and, through them, the clans
773 and the tribes in which these clans are dominant, are linked
together. Thus Kir, in various versions of the myth, is adopted by Gee, the founder of the GAATGANGEEKA family of clans; meets Wot, in whom the Wot tribe is personified; has relations with the GAAWAR; and so forth. The myth, thus, also mirrors intertribal relations and brings the whole of Nuerland into a single kinship structure, which we call the clan system as distinct from the lineage system of a clan.

173 The clan is the farthest range to which agnatic kinship is
773 traced when the marriage of two persons is in question, but
some clans have, nevertheless, an agnatic relationship to other
614 clans, though Nuer do not regard it quite in the same way as
relationship between lineages of a clan. They give the impression, when speaking of the ancestor of a clan, that they regard him as an historical figure, clearly delineated against a background of tradition, while, when speaking of the ancestor of a family of clans, they seem to regard him as a vaguer figure obscured in the dimness of myth.

614 We here note again that the dominant lineages in more than
613 one tribe sometimes form part of the same clan structure. Thus,
619 the lineages dominant in the Gaajok, Gaajak, and Gaagwang

● 614 tribes, to the east and to the west of the Nile, are all segments
613 of the GAATGANKIIR clan. Also the dominant lineages of the
619 Rengyan tribe, to the west of the Nile, and the Lou tribe, to
the east of the Zeraf, are part of the JINACA clan. This distribution is easily accounted for, because we know that till recently

[415]

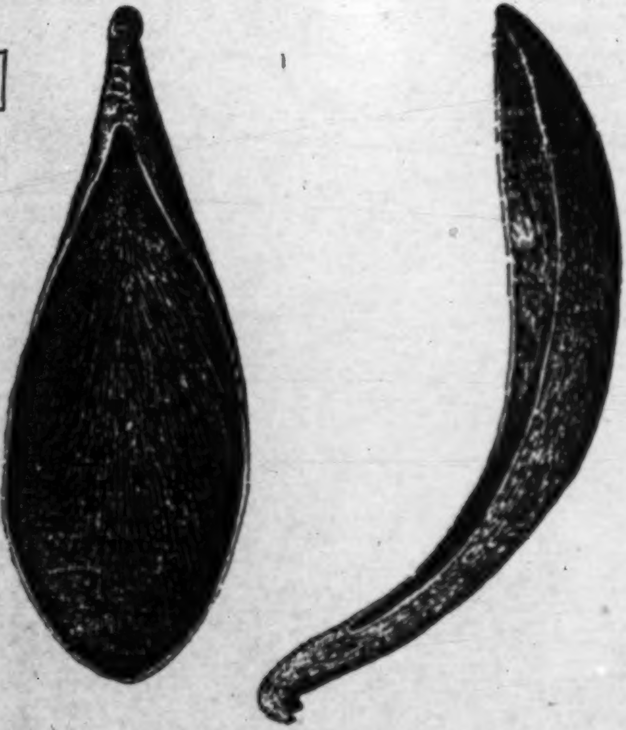

FIG. 14. Buffalo-horn spoons.

the Eastern GAATGANKIIR and the Eastern JINACA lineages lived with the other lineages of these clans in the Jikany and Rengyan areas to the west of the Nile.

There are also more general and mythological relationships between clans. In recounting these relationships Nuer personify
773 the tribes and give them a kinship value by assimilating them
to their dominant clans. Thus, they speak of Bor, Lang, Lou, Thiang, Lak, &c., as though they were persons and could have kinship relations between them like those between persons, and as though all the members of these tribes were of the same

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descent. By so doing they stress community relations and obscure clan differentiation in a political context. This habit often makes their statements appear confused, and even contradictory, but it accords with a strong tendency in social life, as we have seen in discussing the various meanings of the word *'cieng'*, to identify the lineage system and the political system in a specific set of relations.

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Many Nuer regard their ancestors Gee and Ghaak as the progenitors of all true Nuer, though one is given different classifications in different parts of Nuerland. Among the Lou it is said that all the tribes are descended from Gee, except the Jikany and Gaawar tribes. These two alone are differentiated because their proximity makes them significant for the Lou, whereas all the other tribes, which have no direct relations with the Lou, are vaguely classified as children of Gee. Among the Eastern Jikany all true Nuer tend to be classed as 'Gee' in contrast to 'Kir', the Jikany themselves. In the valley of the Zeraf and in Western Nuerland, where the tribes have a very much wider range of intertribal contacts, there is a wider range of differentiation. The Nuer tribes there fall into three classes: the Gee group, consisting of Bor, Lang, Rengyan, Bul, Wot, Ror, Thiang, and Lou, stretches in an unbroken line, from north-west to south-east, across the centre of Nuerland; the Ghaak group, consisting of Nuong, Dok, Jaloogh, Beegh, Gaankwac, and Rol, occupies the south-western part of Nuerland; and the Ril group, consisting of the Leek and Lak, occupies the lower reaches of the Zeraf and the Ghazal near their junction with the Nile. I have sometimes heard the Bul included in the Ril group. However, in Dok country and in adjacent tribal areas people further distinguish between the tribes elsewhere classed as sons of Ghaak and divide them into a Ghaak group, comprising Beegh, and Jaalogh, and a Gwea group, comprising Dok, Nuong, Gaankwac, and Rol.

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In these classifications we note a further exemplification of what we have often observed elsewhere about Nuer classifications: their segmentary tendency and their relativity. Whilst, for example, other Nuer see the Dok and the Beegh as Ghaak they only see themselves as an undivided Ghaak group in opposition to the Gee fraternity and otherwise see themselves

as parts of opposed segments, Gwea and Ghaak. It will be noted 614
that these groups of tribes, often represented as families of 619
clans, occupy distinct sections of Nuerland. Before the period of eastwards migration they ran from north to south, in three or four groups, to the west of the Nile. Territorial contiguity and a common clan structure, such as we find among the Jikany tribes, or close relationship within a clan system, such as we find among the Ghaak group of tribes, go together, and the values of the two systems may be assumed to interact. The segmentation of lineages within a tribe in relation to its political segmentation is thus repeated in the whole clan system of the Nuer, the segments of which are co-ordinated with the political segmentation of Nuerland. Those tribes which are adjacent to one another have a common opposition to other groups of tribes and this relation is reflected in the tendency for them to be represented, through their dominant lineages and clans, as closely related on a mythological and ritual plane.

Gee and Ghaak and Gwea are represented as brothers, sons of 773
a mythological ancestor, sometimes called Ghau, the World, and
sometimes Ran, Man, whose father is said to be Kwoth, God. Ril 602
is often described as one of their brothers as well, though he is sometimes represented to be a son of a daughter of Gee, called Kar.

All sons of Gee have agnatic kinship (*buth*) which allows them to partake of one another's sacrifices. In these ritual situations only the true sons of Gee, the JINACA, the GAATHIANG, and JIDIET, and other clans descended from Gee, have *buth* interrelationship, but in other situations the tribes in which these clans have a dominant status are represented as brothers or first cousins. Thus Thiang is said to have been the eldest son of Gee, Nac (Rengyan and Lou) the second son, Ror and other tribes younger sons; and Rengyan (Nac) and Wot (Dit) are said to have been twins, as also Bor and Lang, sons of Meat.

Some tribes stand outside this big family. The Jikany tribes 773
have dominant lineages of Dinka origin, descended from Kir,
who was found in a gourd by a man of the Ngok Dinka, but, as 602
was earlier explained, they are mythologically related to the 619
Gee group, because Gee is variously represented as the protector or father-in-law of Kir. The GAATGANKIIR have a *buth* relationship with some lineage system of the Ngok Dinka, and there-

773 fore, in an unprecise political sense, the Jikany and Ngok Dinka
tribes have, by analogy, a fraternal relationship. It may safely
602 be assumed that at one time they had close intertribal relations.
619 The GAAWAR clan have also an independent origin, their ancestor
having descended from heaven. However, a number of mythological links unite him to the founders of various clans which are dominant in tribes of the Ghaak group (see pp. 230–1), and the Gaawar tribe therefore belongs to this group. Although the Nile now separates it from the other members of the group it was at one time their most northern extension on the west bank. Owing to *buth* relationship between GAAWAR and other clans of the family of clans descended from Kwook, Gaawar are said to go with the people of the Fadang section of the Bor tribe and the Atwot people, who are said to have lived at one time between the present Rengyan and Dok tribal areas.

Through the recognition of agnatic relationship between exogamous clans and of cognatic and mythological ties between clans not considered to be agnates, all the Nuer tribes are by assimilation of political to kinship values conceptualized as a single social system. A number of clans are not associated with tribes, but their lineages are included in this system by the affiliation of the clans to one or other of the large families of clans. Thus, the JIMEM, JIKUL, GAATLEAK, and JITHER are descended from Gee and belong to the Gee group; the JIKUL are mythologically attached to the Ril group and the JAKAR to the Ghaak group; and so on. The whole of the Nuer are brought into a single kinship or pseudo-kinship system and all the territorial segments of Nuerland are interconnected by that system.

XIII

619 In our view the unusual degree of genealogical segmentation
in the Nuer lineage system is to be understood in terms of tribal
613 structure, which is, as we have seen, characterized by its tendency towards segmentation. The association of the lineage
614 system with the tribal system means that as the tribe splits into
segments so will the clan split into segments, and that the lines of cleavage will tend to coincide, for lineages are not corporate groups but are embodied in local communities through which they function structurally. Just as a man is a member of a tribal

segment opposed to other segments of the same order and yet also 619
a member of the tribe which embraces all these segments, so also
he is a member of a lineage opposed to other lineages of the same 613
order and yet also a member of the clan which embraces all 614
these lineages, and there is a definite correspondence between
these two sets of affiliations, since the lineage is embodied in the segment and the clan in the tribe. Therefore, the distance in clan structure between two lineages of a dominant clan tends to correspond to the structural distance between the tribal segments with which they are associated. Hence the tribal system draws out and segments the dominant clans and gives them their characteristic lineage form. Evidence in support of this contention could be cited from any Nuer tribe; we propose to examine only a few typical examples.

We have observed that in the Lou tribe the Gaatbal and Rumjok secondary sections form the primary section of Gun in opposition to the Mor primary section, and how the dominant lineages of the Gaatbal and the Rumjok sections are descended from one wife of Denac and the dominant lineage of the Mor section is descended from a different wife, so that Gaatbal and Rumjok are to one another in a relation analogous to that of full brothers and the Gun stand to the Mor in a relation analogous to that of half-brothers. We have noted, likewise, how the dominant lineages of the Gaajak are descended from two closely related wives of Kir while the dominant lineages of the Gaajok and Gaagwang, which have a very close alliance, are descended from a third wife.

The GAATGANKIIR lineages in their relation to the segmentary structure of the Jikany tribes provide an excellent test of the hypothesis that lineage structure is twisted into the form of the political structure, for the same lineages are found at extremities of Nuerland where political conditions are not identical. Had I had more time in the Jikany countries, or had I formulated the problem more clearly in the little time I had to spend there, I might have been in a position to state my conclusions more dogmatically. We will briefly analyse the lineage system of the GAATGANKIIR in its relation to two of the Gaajak primary sections.

Thiang was the eldest son of Kir. He had two wives, Nyagaani 613
and Baal. From these two wives spring the three main lineages of
cieng Thiang, the Thiang primary tribal section, TAR, LONY (or 173
GEK), and KANG. What is said to have happened is shown in the diagram on p. 242. Tar, being the only son of his mother, has founded an independent lineage and tribal section, that which lives in the

221 are dry-season activities. Also, milking, cleaning kraals, making up fires, cooking, pounding grain, and other chores which are performed separately and at different times by each household in the villages tend to be performed in unison in the camps. The greater density of the community and the rigours of the season
361 impose a common regimen. Another feature of cattle camps which has some social importance is their composition. Neighbouring village communities which in the rains occupy different sites, often divided by wide swamps, frequently make common camp or they camp so near to each other that there are more intimate relations between their members in the dry season. The radius of effective kinship is greater in the dry season than in the wet.

Although there is this greater cohesion in camps, the families and joint families and larger clusters of kin whose social distinction is evident in the distribution of homesteads in the villages maintain their identity in the distribution of camp windscreens and huts. Each family has its own windscreen, corresponding to its byre in the village, and in the centre of it is the *gol*, its hearth of ashes. Attached to the windscreen are the beehive huts of the womenfolk, just as in the villages their wattle-and-daub huts are attached to the byre. The windscreens of those whose homesteads adjoin in the villages are generally adjacent to, almost touching, one another in the camps and form clearly demarcated rows in the circle of camp dwellings. When a large village is clearly segmented, the separation observable in the distribution of its homesteads can also be noted in the dispersal of smaller camps within the general camping area. These social alinements are most evident in the early part of the dry season, before the large concentrations of the main season have been formed, for then small groups of kin often make independent camps around isolated pools at some, sometimes a considerable, distance from each other.

II

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614 All the members of such a village or camp as I have briefly described[a] are kin. Before giving examples in illustration of this statement I must say again what I have already said in *The Nuer* about the difference between lineage relations and kin relations because it is a very important difference. In speaking of lineages I refer to unilateral groups of kin—among the Nuer groups of

[a] [cf. cat. 116, pp. 2 ff.-- Analyst]

agnates—and in speaking of kinship I refer to categories of kin. 602
In speaking of lineage relations I therefore refer to relations 613
between groups within a system of such groups, whereas in speak- 614
ing of kin, or kinship, relations I refer to relations between persons standing to one another in certain categories of relationship within a system of such categories. It is often difficult for those who have not lived in a society with a lineage structure to appreciate the distinction I have drawn because the relationship between collateral lineages of the same clan is necessarily also one that can be expressed in terms of a kinship category, and it is possible in certain circumstances even to speak of the relation between lineages of different clans in similar terms, for they may wish on occasions to stress a genealogical nexus between themselves, indicating thereby that, for example, the one stand to the other as *gaatnar*, children of the maternal uncle, or as *gaatwac*, children of the paternal aunt. But in these cases it is a relationship between groups that is referred to and not a personal relationship between individuals except in so far as it is derived from the relationship between the groups to which they belong.

As I have explained in *The Nuer*, the lineages of Nuerland are dispersed groups, though in a certain sense they may be regarded as corporate groups in the form they take as political segments in fusion with other elements. They provide the conceptual framework of the political system within which they also function as its organizing principle through the expression of political fission and fusion in terms of their segmentary structure. The identification of lineage segments with tribal segments in a political context is brought about by the acknowledgement that certain clans and their lineages have rights in certain tribal areas and by the residence in those areas of a sufficient number of members of these dominant groups to act as nuclei of local and political groups. It probably never happens that all members of a lineage of any order—maximal, major, minor, or minimal—live in the area associated with it and to which it gives its name, though very many of them may do so.

Because the usual reference to a lineage is in a political context it 601
is generally spoken of as the *cieng* of such-and-such a people (the 613
name of the lineage being given), for, like the word *gol*, *cieng* has 614
always a residential, and not an exclusive descent, connotation.
When reference is made to a lineage in a context in which it is

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desired to particularize it as an exclusive descent group, a group of agnatic kin descended from a common ancestor, Nuer use the expressions *thok dwiel* or *thok mac*, literally the doorway to a hut or the hearth, to denote it; but these expressions are little used because abstraction of a lineage from its social and political matrix has only rarely to be made: on certain ritual occasions and in connexion with feuds and rules of exogamy.

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The distinction between an agnatic lineage relation and an agnatic kinship relation is clearly made by Nuer themselves, from whom indeed I learnt it. They use the word *buth* to describe agnatic kinship between collateral lineages, that is to say, kinship between groups and between individuals only in virtue of their membership of these groups. On the other hand, they use the word *mar* to describe any and every relationship of a kinship kind between persons. All persons with whom a man acknowledges any kind of kinship, through however many other persons, are *mar*, kin, to him. People say of him and of any such person '*teke mar*', 'they have kinship'; and he speaks of any or all of his relations as '*jimarida*', 'my kinsmen'. The term *mar* includes relatives through the mother, the maternal kin, and through the father, the paternal kin. This is the meaning the word has when used by Nuer collectively and without restrictive qualification. Its sphere of reference is indicative of the balance we find in social life generally between the paternal kin and the maternal kin, a balance evident in the configurations of kin in local communities which I am about to describe. Nuer also sometimes use *mar* when speaking of affinal relations, especially when they are long established. In a broad sense they also are kin in the eyes of Nuer, just as in our own society we include our affines in the category of relatives.

Where there is a *buth* relationship between lineages there must also, in one way of speaking, be *mar* between the members of one and the members of the other, for the relationship between collateral lineages is agnatic and the members of the one must therefore be patrilineal kin to the members of the other. The question therefore arises: at what point in the spread of an agnatic line, conceived of as a number of living patrilineal kinsmen, does interpersonal *mar* relationship become the inter-group relationship Nuer call *buth* so that these kinsmen divide into segmentary descent groups or lineages? The question may be put in another way: how many generations back do Nuer trace patrilineal ascent

KINSHIP AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

621 613 614 602 The village site belongs to the Riaagh lineage of the Keunyang maximal lineage of the Gaatbol clan, the dominant clan in Leek tribal area of which Karlual area, where Nyueny is situated, is a section. Members of that lineage with their wives and concubines and their affines account for ten out of the twenty-six homesteads. The people of Nyueny hamlet, the central and northern parts of the village, are known as 'the children of Jany', and Jany's descendants with their wives and concubines and affines account for another ten homesteads. 'The children of Jany', whose *tut* is Karlual (homestead 9),[1] count collectively as *gaatwac*, children of the paternal aunt, or, as Nuer often put it, *gaatnyiet*, children of daughters, to the Riaagh lineage, whom they call *gaatnar*, children of the maternal uncle. The senior Riaagh men are the 'bulls' of the village in the tribal sense of the word *tut*.

621 602 It will again be observed that the village is not an exclusive lineage group (with its wives) but is a cluster of kin (including affines). In this case, however, there is a lineage core to the village community, and this core is that branch of the dominant clan of the tribe which owns the village site. Some members of its collateral minimal lineage, the Gom, also live in the village. I draw attention to further typical features. We saw that at Konye many of the heads of families were living there because of affinal relationships with other members of the village. The counterpart to this is the relationship of sister's son to mother's brother, for when the children of a resident sister or daughter grow up in a village those who stand in an affinal relationship to their father stand in an avuncular relationship to them. This is a very significant feature of Nuer local communities and from it follows another common feature: in course of time a maternal link of this kind may be treated as though it were a paternal link and therefore within the genealogical structure of the principal lineage of the community. Jany's mother Duai is so treated. Nuer say of a woman who has this structural position that 'she has become a man'. Cognation becomes regarded for ordinary social purposes [591] within community life as equal to agnation. A sister's son-mother's brother relationship may come about in a village not by a man going to live with his wife's people but by widows bringing their children to live with their own people after their husbands have died, a mode of residence which in certain circumstances may continue after the deaths of the mothers. This

[1] [Cf. Oct. 116, p. (13)-- Analyst]

597 any other rigid hierarchical structure. It has been brought about
563 by their incorporation into Nuer lineages by adoption and by
613 their assimilation to them through intermarriage. When Dinka
are adopted into a lineage, absorption into Nuer society presents no great difficulty. Their Dinka origin is remembered by members of the lineage of their adoption, at any rate for some generations, but after one or two generations it may not be known to outsiders; and I suppose that in course of time it may be forgotten within the lineage itself. They are part of the lineage, have the same status as its other members, and are points of growth in the branch equal to men born into it. But when Dinka are not adopted into a Nuer lineage absorption is achieved with greater difficulty and by circuitous means. If we examine closely the history of those persons in the genealogies I have recorded who have attached themselves permanently to an affinal or maternal family and through it to a minimal lineage, and if we trace also the histories of those persons who through such an attachment in the past now trace their descent from the lineage through a female, we shall find that in a very great number, I venture to say in the vast majority, of cases they are Dinka. This is a development which it is easy to understand because captured Dinka or Dinka immigrants into Nuerland have lost their status in their own kinship and lineage systems, and if they are not adopted into Nuer lineages they can only acquire status in Nuer society through affinal relationships; and their children, having no kin on the father's side, identify themselves with the mother's kin and, having no lineage on the father's side, seek affiliation to the mother's lineage. It is true that
621 we find strangers of Nuer clans as members of clusters of kin
614 around a lineage core of the dominant clan of the tribe, but where the attachment is permanent these strangers are, in my experience, generally persons of those Nuer clans which have no tribal territory of their own—no *wec*, local community, as Nuer say—like the Jimem, Jikul, and Kiek clans. These clans have, moreover, in some cases mythological beginnings placing them outside the main family of Nuer clans and suggesting foreign origin. Assimilation in such cases can never be so complete as in the case of Dinka, because members of Nuer clans have their own clan symbols and their own *buth* relationships which attach them to the lineages of their birth.

000 Another factor which has certainly had some influence in

582 rules forbidding marriage within certain groups and between certain categories of persons are not coterminous with those forbidding sexual congress, the two cannot be divorced. The reason given by Nuer for their marriage prohibitions is that were marriage to take place within certain degrees of relationship it would be *rual*, incest.

835 The word *rual* means both incest and the misfortune which it 684 causes. Syphilis and certain forms of yaws are believed to be espe- 753 cially a consequence of incest, though retribution may come in any form, from wild beasts, a spear, drowning, sickness, &c. These misfortunes can sometimes be avoided by sacrifice. On the other hand, they may fall not only on the partners to the sin but also on their closest relatives, so that a man who commits incest may render himself responsible for homicide as well.

582 When it is forbidden for a man to have relations with a woman he may not, of course, marry her, and it will be simpler to begin this account by stating the Nuer table of marriage prohibitions. Marriage is not permitted between clansfolk, close cognates, close natural kinsfolk, close kinsfolk by adoption, close affines, and persons who stand to one another as fathers and daughters in the age-set system.

A man may not marry a clanswoman and *a fortiori* a woman of his lineage. Agnatic kinship is recognized between some clans, but it does not constitute a bar to intermarriage. The relationship is considered to be very distant and, in any case, the ancestor of the fraternal clans is believed to have cut an ox in twain to permit intermarriage between the descendants of his sons. Nuer accept the hypothesis that maximal lineages of the larger clans might one day split apart and marriage be allowed between them, but 'at present they are too close'. They say '*cike diel*', 'they have not yet reached ten generations (from their founder)'. They perceive that the limits of clan exogamy have been fixed arbitrarily and are not unalterable.

582 Clan exogamy is stated by Nuer in terms of clan symbols. Each 614 clan has one or more spear-names, with which go certain honorific titles, and the spear-names of the bride's clan and the bridegroom's clan are formally shouted out at weddings. They must not be exactly the same, for this would mean that the marriage was a breach of the rule of clan exogamy. When a marriage is proposed between a youth and maid whose families are strangers the first

inquiry made is into the spear-names of their clans. It sometimes happens that two unrelated clans have the same primary spear-names but have different secondary spear-names which serve to distinguish them ritually. It also sometimes happens that two maximal lineages of the same clan have different secondary spear-names, but in this case the secondary differentiation would not permit intermarriage. Nuer go into this matter very carefully if there is any doubt about clan relationship, as in certain circumstances there might be. 582 614

A man may not marry any close cognate. Nuer consider that if relationship can be traced between a man and a woman through either father or mother, however many female links there may be, up to six generations, though the number of generations is not absolutely fixed, marriage should not take place between them. An ox is believed to have been cut in two in ancient days to permit intermarriage between persons who are descended from a common ancestor beyond that point, so long as they are not agnates. Nuer explain that a man who is related to a woman as far back as six generations might still claim a small gift at her marriage, a clear indication that they cannot marry. If a proposed union is a borderline case a gourd may be ritually broken in half to end kinship. They then say '*bakena mar*', 'we split kinship', and '*ba bak ne kir*', 'it (kinship) is split with a gourd'. It should be noted, however, that a man cannot marry the daughter of a woman of his own maximal lineage even though the lines of himself and the mother converge at a point more than six generations back. Some clans permit marriage to the daughter of a woman of a collateral maximal lineage of the clan. Stated in a slightly different way, a man or woman may marry into his, or her, mother's clan but not into her maximal lineage. Other clans do not allow a man to marry into his mother's clan in any circumstances. 582

When, as often happens among the Nuer, the physiological father, the genitor, is a different man from the legal father, the pater, his sons will not marry into his minimal lineage because the physiological connexion is socially recognized by the payment to the natural father of a cow of the bridewealth of his natural daughters. They may, however, marry women of a collateral lineage. Close natural cognation of any kind is a bar to marriage. Thus I was told that a man would not marry the daughter of his *nar laka*, the natural son of his maternal grandfather.

835 recorded in this essay.[1] Nor can I discuss at the length required
the political implications of Nuer exogamous rules. I have
devoted a few pages in *The Nuer*[2] to this aspect of them, the
argument of which may be presented here in a few sentences.
621 The Nuer political structure was treated in that book as a system
619 of relations between territorial groups which express both their
613 autonomy and their participation in the system in terms of
614 lineage and clan affiliations. The local groups are organized
into a common tribal structure through the association of clans with tribes, and the various lineages of these dominant clans in each tribe with the various sections and sub-sections of the tribe. Political structure is conceptualized in lineage structure. To play this part lineages must be both unique groups and at the same time be identified with local communities within which they function politically. Were they to lose entirely their uniqueness as descent groups the lineage structure in which the local communities see themselves as parts of a tribal organization would collapse. Were they not to merge in the network of kinship relations of which each local community is composed they would lack that corporateness which identification with residential groups gives them and be an abstraction, since they are not corporate groups in their own right. A man acts sometimes as a lineage member, cutting himself off from the community of which he is part, but in ordinary social life he acts as a member of this community without reference to his exclusive lineage affiliation. In some situations values of descent determine his conduct but in most situations it is determined by kinship values or by those community values which are an expression on a political plane of a sentiment created by a network of personal relations within the kinship system. This separation of the lineage from community life and its merging into it again is very largely brought about by the rules of exogamy which exclude marriage within the clan, thus giving that group distinctness, while compelling its lineages, by marrying outside the clan, to become multiple links in the network of kinship relations the strands of which form the texture of community life. Every Nuer local community thus becomes a

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[1] Information on these subjects will be found in my papers: 'Nuer Bridewealth', *Africa*, xvi. 4 (1946); 'Nuer Marriage Ceremonies', ibid. xviii. 1 (1948); and *Some Aspects of Marriage and the Family among the Nuer*, Rhodes-Livingstone Paper No. 11 (1945).

[2] *The Nuer*, Oxford: Clarendon Press (1940), pp. 225–8.

community of kindred every member of which regulates his 621
behaviour to every other member in accordance with a variety 619
of kinship patterns and can predict their behaviour to himself 613
in conformity with the same norms. 614

When a local community becomes in this way a network of 582
kinship ties it is necessary, so varied and extensive are the relationships 602
which come under the exogamous ban, to marry 621
outside it, so that not only is the social autonomy of lineage groups prevented by the rules regulating marriage but also the social autonomy of residential groups. Kinship ties thus cross the gaps in political structure and unite members of opposed segments of it. Every political group of whatever size has a wider social setting outside its boundaries.

Local communities become therefore groups of people who, being all interrelated in one way or another, must marry into a different local community. This happens because the Nuer make any kind of cognatic relationship to several degrees a bar to marriage and, at least so it seems to me, it is a bar to marriage because of the fundamental agnatic principle running through Nuer society. In any Nuer residential group, of whatever size, there is a great variety of personal ties of a kinship order bringing its members into a texture of relationships, but the warp of the texture is the agnatic lineage and to it everyone attaches himself locally. If a man is not a member of the lineage with which he lives he makes himself a member of it by, in one way or another, treating a maternal link as though it was a paternal one. The lineage is thus in its corporate character a composite structure of cognatic branches and attachments in which the value of agnation is the integrating principle. The solidarity of a group of persons living together, and thereby the lineage structure which contains them, is maintained by emphasizing cognation in the rules of exogamy.

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421 178 obtained by work or the sale of such products as hides and grain; and money can be used, apart from trade goods now in demand, to purchase cattle, although the market for cattle is still very limited.

436 Legal concepts based on values related to a subsistence economy only and conditioned by relative scarcity are bound to be modified when the economy begins to change, and the availability of certain articles is vastly increased. For example, although Nuer now practise agriculture on a larger scale than before and it is therefore of greater importance, an iron hoe valued at several head of cattle in the scale of traditional compensation, if it is ever stolen at all, now demands nothing more than material restitution. Another hoe can be purchased for a few piastres almost anywhere, and the threat of hardship from its loss is negligible. Hence nowadays the potential value of the hoe is ignored; only the actual trade value is assessed and, as will be seen, the wrong inflicted on the owner by taking it from him is not considered.

2. LAND TENURE, GRAZING RIGHTS, AND RIGHTS IN WATER

General Considerations

423 614 Rights in land, grazing, and fishing and drinking pools are held by those who are considered to be the descendants of the original occupiers of the area. This is particularly true of Nuer east of the Nile, for such rights are held by descent from the original colonizers. An understanding of land tenure, therefore, requires an analysis of the lineal structure of Nuer society and of the way in which areas were seized from the Dinka and occupied, mostly towards the end of the last century. The position and function of the nuclear clan or 'aristocrats' in each area who are called *diel*—as opposed to *rul*, i.e. later accretions who attach themselves to the original occupants—has already been explained. Most Nuer clans or tribes have strong traditions of an original division of land. Later accretions only acquire rights of possession by association with the nuclear lineage. This is in fact the basis of the whole system of Nuer society. Many *rul* lineages attempt to attach themselves to a nuclear lineage by real or fictitious relationship, often through intermarriage. The distinction in the latter case is clear, for, as we have seen, those who link themselves to the *diel* through previous marriages are called *gaat nyiet*, the 'sons of daughters', as opposed to *gaat tutni*,[1] 'sons of bulls'. *Diel* are always *gaat tutni* in the area they occupy; *gaat nyiet* are always *rul*, though *rul* are not all necessarily *gaat nyiet*. It seems that the word *rul* is applied with greater emotional intensity to those who have arrived and settled more recently, while those whose ancestors attached themselves earlier in Nuer

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[1] See p. 78.

423 [614] history to a nuclear clan have acquired so much associated tradition that the attachment is confirmed.

Land tenure here means the holding of, and rights to, the high ridges and sandy outcrops which the Nuer occupy during the wet season, where they build their permanent villages and cattle-byres and clear their cultivations, and the various forms of land used for pastures and fishing in the dry season. That certain communities, consisting of the *diel* and later accretions by association, have a definite right to distinct areas is clearly recognized by all Nuer. The sanction for possession in the past was, however, physical force and power to resist the encroachment of others, while nowadays the *status quo* is maintained by the Government.[1]

Occupation of the land and prescriptive rights to a certain territory are often expressed in mythological terms linked to the history of the nuclear lineage. The original ancestor is said to have divided land among his sons, themselves ancestors of particular collateral lineages, in the same way as he divided his cattle and sometimes his ritual functions among them. But this is merely an idiom which gives emotional emphasis to ownership of land vested in that nuclear lineage, for land, either arable or pasture, is not a form of property which is normally controlled by the laws of inheritance. A man's eldest son will inherit his huts and cattle-byre, while the other sons continue to occupy them so long as they wish to do so, particularly if they are not married; but, as younger sons, they have no specified portions of their father's land, and there is consequently no individual inheritance of land. When they wish to do so, they will build their houses and set up their homes in some area which is unoccupied, for there is usually no shortage.

311 As I have explained in the introduction, three types of land are utilized by the Nuer, and each is of definite value at certain times of the year. The 'high land', ridges of higher, better-drained ground, provides for the permanent settlements mainly occupied during the rains from approximately May until November, though the period varies according to latitude and local climatic conditions. This area is largely used for the cultivation of millet (their staple crop), of maize and tobacco and the few vegetables which some Nuer grow. Beyond, and usually surrounding the higher ridges, are the 'intermediate' grass plains which are subject to variable flooding from accumulated rainfall which only drains away with difficulty, especially if the ground is already saturated. These 'intermediate' areas are utilized at the end of the rains for pasture so long as sufficient moisture remains in the soil to allow a green regrowth from the perennial grasses after they

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[1] Nuer did not confine their aggressive movements to the Dinka. Other Nuer tribes were often attacked and their territory occupied. For example, the Lou Nuer originally occupied the Zeraf Island, but a military alliance between Thiang and Lak drove them out.

619 segments or with two tribes. The tribal system as defined by sociological analysis can, therefore, only be said to approximate to any simple diagrammatic presentation. A tribe is an exemplification of a segmentary tendency which is characteristic of the political structure as a whole. The reason why we speak of Nuer political groups, and of the tribe in particular, as relative groups and state that they are not easily described in terms of political morphology, is that political relations are dynamic. They are always changing in one direction or another. The most evident movement is towards fission. The tendency of tribes and tribal sections towards fission and internal opposition between their parts is balanced by a tendency in the direction of fusion, of the combination or amalgamation of groups. This tendency towards fusion is inherent in the segmentary character of Nuer political structure, for, although any group tends to split into opposed parts, these parts tend to fuse in relation to other groups. Hence fission and fusion are two aspects of the same segmentary principle and the Nuer tribe and its divisions are to be understood as a relation between these two contradictory, yet complementary, tendencies. Physical environment, way of livelihood, mode of distribution, poor communications, simple economy, &c., to some extent explain the incidence of political cleavage, but the tendency towards segmentation seems to be inherent in political structure itself.

III. Lineage System

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613 Tribal unity cannot be accounted for by any of the facts we have so far mentioned, taken alone or in the aggregate, but only by
● [614] reference to the lineage system. The Nuer clan is not an undifferentiated group of persons who recognize their common kinship, as are many African clans, but is highly segmented. The segments are genealogical structures, and we therefore refer to them as lineages and to the clan as an exogamous system of lineages which trace their descent to a common ancestor. The defining characteristic of a lineage is that the relationship of any member of it to other members can be exactly stated in genealogical terms. His relationship to members of other lineages of the same clan is, therefore, also known, since lineages are genealogically related. Thus, in the diagram below, A is a clan which is segmented into maximal lineages B and C and these again bifurcate

into major lineages D, E, F, and G. In the same manner, minor 619
lineages H, I, J, and K are segments of major lineages E and F; 613
and L, M, N, and O are minimal lineages which are segments of
minor lineages H and J. The whole clan is a genealogical structure, [614] ●
i.e. the letters represent persons to whom the clan and its segments
trace their descent, and from whom they often take their names.
There must be at least twenty such clans in Nuerland, without
taking into account many small lineages of Dinka origin.

The Nuer lineage is a group of agnates, and comprises all living persons descended, through males only, from the founder of that particular line. Logically, it also includes dead persons descended from the founder, but these dead persons are only significant in that their genealogical position explains the relationship between the living. The wider agnatic kinship is recognized the further back descent has to be traced, so that the depth of a lineage is always in proportion to its width.

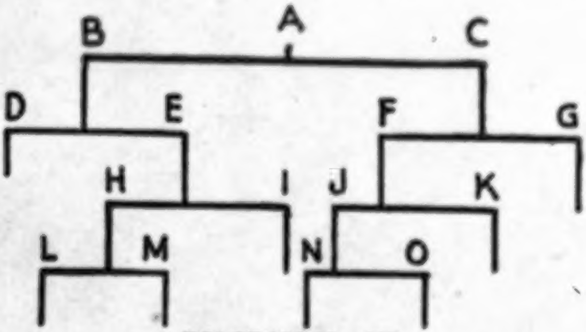

DIAGRAM No. III

The Nuer clan, being thus highly segmented, has many of the 613
characteristics which we have found in tribal structure. Its lineages
are distinct groups only in relation to each other. Thus, in the
diagram, M is a group only by opposition to L, H is a group only
by opposition to I, D is a group only by opposition to E, and so on.
There is always fusion of collateral lineages of the same branch in
relation to a collateral branch, e.g. in the diagram, L and M are no
longer separate minimal lineages, but are a single minor lineage,
H, in opposition to I, and D and E are no longer separate major
lineages, but are a single maximal lineage, B, in opposition to C.
Hence two lineages which are equal and opposite are composite in
relation to a third, so that a man is a member of a lineage in relation

613 to a certain group and not a member of it in relation to a different group. Lineages are thus essentially relative groups, like tribal sections, and, like them, also are dynamic groups. Therefore they can only be described satisfactorily in terms of values and situations.

613 621 Nuer lineages are not corporate localized communities though their members often have an association with a locality and speak of the locality as though it were an exclusive agnatic group. Every Nuer village is associated with a lineage, and though the members of it often comprise a small proportion of the community, it is identified with them in such a way that we may speak of it as an aggregate of persons clustered around an agnatic nucleus. The aggregate is linguistically identified with the nucleus by the designation of the village community by the name of the lineage. It is only in reference to rules of exogamy and certain ritual activities that one needs to regard lineages as completely autonomous groups. In social life generally, they function within local communities, of all sizes from the village to the tribe, and as part of them. We cannot here discuss the ways by which residential groups become a network of kinship ties—marriage, adoption, and various fictions—but the result tends to be that a local group is a cognatic cluster round an agnatic core, the rules of exogamy being the operating principle in this tendency.

614 Nuer clans are everywhere much dispersed, so that in any village or camp one finds representatives of diverse clans. Small lineages have moved freely over Nuerland and have settled here and there and have aggregated themselves to agnatically unrelated elements in local communities. Migration and the absorption of Dinka have been circumstances favouring the dispersal and mixture of clans. Being a conquering, pastoral people and not [769] having an ancestral cult, the Nuer have never been bound to any particular spot by necessity or sentiment.

Nevertheless, there is a straight relation between political structure and the clan system, for a clan, or a maximal lineage, is associated with each tribe, in which it occupies a dominant position among other agnatic groups. Moreover, each of its segments tends to be associated with a segment of the tribe in such a way that there is a correspondence, and often a linguistic identification, between the parts of a clan and the parts of a tribe. Thus if we compare Diagrams II[1] and III[2] and suppose clan A to be the dominant clan in tribe B, then maximal lineages B and C correspond to primary

[1] [see p. 282, cat. 116 -- Analyst]
[2] [see p. 285, cat. 285 -- Analyst]

sections X and Y; major lineages D and E correspond to secondary 614
section X^1 and X^2; major lineages F and G correspond to secondary sections Y^1 and Y^2; and minor lineages J and K correspond to tertiary sections Z^1 and Z^2.

We speak of a clan which is dominant in a tribe as the aristocratic clan, although, except on the periphery of Nuer expansion eastwards, its predominance gives prestige rather than privilege. Its members are in a minority—often a very small minority—in the tribe. Not all members of the aristocratic clan live in the tribe where it is dominant, but many are also found in other tribes. Not all clans are associated with a tribe in this manner. A man is only an aristocrat in the one tribe in which his clan is dominant. *If he* lives in another tribe, he is not an aristocrat there.

There is consequently in every tribe some social differentiation. 614
There are aristocrats, Nuer of other clans, and Dinka, but these 565
strata are not classes and the second and third are properly to be regarded as categories rather than as groups. The Dinka who have been absorbed into Nuer society have been for the most part incorporated into their kinship system by adoption and marriage, and conquest has not led to the development of classes or castes. This is, perhaps, to be attributed, in part at any rate, to the fact that the Dinka, like the Nuer, are chiefly pastoralists and that in other respects their ways of life are very similar.

Without presenting all the evidence and without making every qualification, we attempt an explanation of why Nuer clans, especially the dominant clans, are segmented into lineages to a far greater degree than is usual among African peoples. In our view, they are segmented because the political structure to which they correspond is segmented in the way we have described. Social obligations among the Nuer are expressed chiefly in a kinship idiom and the interrelations of local communities within a tribe are defined in terms of agnatic relationship. Therefore, as the tribe segments the clan segments with it and the point of separation between the tribal sections becomes the point of divergence in the clan structure of the lineages associated with each section. For, as we have seen, clans and their lineages are not distinct corporate groups, but are embodied in local communities, through which they function structurally. Such being the case, it is not surprising that they take the form of the State which gives them corporate substance.

619 614 565 Those clans which are associated with tribes have generally greater lineage extension and depth than those which are not so associated, and the larger the tribe the more significance this association has for the Nuer. It is in the largest tribes, territorially and numerically, and those which have expanded most and assimilated most foreigners, like the Lou and Eastern Gaajak and Gaajok tribes, that we find the greatest attention paid to the distinct and dominant position of the aristocratic clans. Indeed, not only do political relations affect the clan structural form, splitting it into segments along the lines of political fission, but also the clan system may be said to have a corresponding action on the political structure. In a confusion of lineages of different clan origin and in an amorphous network of cognatic links, the political structure is given consistent form, in the language of kinship, by one clan—a single system of lineages—being made to correspond to the tribe and to its structure of opposed segments. Just as a man is a member of a tribal segment opposed to other segments of the same order and yet also a member of the tribe which embraces all these segments, so also he is a member of a lineage opposed to other lineages of the same order and yet also a member of the clan which embraces all these lineages, and there is a strict correspondence between these two sets of affiliations, since the lineage is embodied in the segment and the clan in the tribe. Moreover, the distance in clan structure between two lineages of a dominant clan tends to correspond to the distance in tribal structure between the two sections with which they are associated. Thus the system of lineages of the dominant clan enables the Nuer to think of their tribe in the highly consistent form of clan structure. In each segment the network of kinship ties are given unity and coherence by their common relationship to the lineage of the dominant clan that resides there, and as these separate lineages are composite in relation to other clans so the whole tribe is built around an exclusive agnatic framework. Though the sections may tend to draw apart and to split, a common agnatic value, shared by the dominant lineages contained in them, endures.

IV. Age-set System

561 Another tribal institution is the age-set system, which is socially more significant among the Nuer than among other Nilotic peoples of the Sudan. Nuer boys pass into the grade of manhood through

619 and Gaawär or between Lou and Gaajok. In Gaajok country I was
also repeatedly informed that there was *cut* between all Gaajok tribesmen,
621 but no *cut* between them and Gaagwang or Gaajak tribesmen. It is
682 true that tribes are not water-tight compartments. People moved all
628 over Nuerland with remarkable freedom and there are strong social bonds
[587] uniting people with members of tribes other than their own, particularly
●[614] the bonds of marriage (there has always been interchange of daughters
between Lou and Gaajok, for instance) and the bonds of clanship (the
dominant elements in Gaajok and Gaajak tribes, for example, belong
to the same clan since they are all descended from the same ancestor,
Kir. Also lineages of the same clan are scattered far and wide among
a dozen different tribes, but still recognise their kinship in spite of their
territorial disintegration). Nevertheless, the declarations of Nuer on
this point must have some significance, and I consider it well to record
my own impressions from their verbal statements, together with Mr.
Coriat's criticism. The point is important, but not overwhelmingly
619 so. What is of greater significance is that each tribe has its own tribal
officials who regulate disputes among tribesmen in so far as their ritual
624 functions allow them to do so. The Lou leopard-skin chiefs regulate
disputes among Lou tribesmen and Gaajok leopard-skin chiefs regulate
disputes among Gaajok tribesmen. In virtue of his sacred character a
leopard-skin chief (or land expert) can perform his ritual functions
irrespective of tribal boundaries, but in the nature of things one does not
summon a leopard-skin chief from Gaajok country to function in Lou
country, but each district of Lou country has its regular experts who
perform whatever services are required of them by fellow tribesmen of
their section.

619 (4) Tribesmen unite for defensive and offensive warfare against
721 other tribes and segments of other nations. Messengers summoned
Lou tribesmen from all over the tribal area for a combined raid on the
648 Dinka and those who wished to take part in the raid answered the summons.
In such expeditions there was a truce to disputes within the
tribe itself and temporary tribal solidarity was attained. Mr. Coriat
points out to me, with some justice, that "it is incorrect to state that
the tribe is the largest political unit within the nation. Their history can
show many instances where two or more tribes have combined in common
offence and defence. As an example, Lou and Jekany against the Anuak,

823 196 rather more inclusive. But both are used to refer to " our home," " our hamlet," "our village." Thus Pakur (Lek tribe) village is divided up into a number of hamlets, and one may speak of each hamlet with the unoccupied land around it which divides it off from neighbouring hamlets as a *dor* and designate it by some landmark, e.g., *dor ngop* (the part of the village which lies near the *gameiza* (fig-tree)), *dor wich kwer* (the part of the village which lies around a sandy eminence) and *dor thok ruop* (the part of the village which borders the forest). As we have already noticed, such territorial expressions become identified with the people who occupy the territory, so in this case we may speak of Cuol *ngop* and Cuol *wich kwer*, the section of the Cuol lineage who live near the *Gameiza* tree and the section of the Cuol lineage who live near the sandy eminence.

I mention these three Nuer words, *cieng*, *gol*, and *dor*, because they are so frequently heard on Nuer lips and to explain that my reason for using them so seldom in the text is that they refer to so many different things according to the context in which they are spoken.

III.

621 I have spoken of the clan as forming the iron girders upon which the political structure of the tribe is built up; I have spoken of each tribe having a dominant element within it; I have mentioned that the territorial groups of Nuer country integrate themselves around a kinship nucleus and that their cohesion depends upon this nucleus as much as upon communal life or locality; I have remarked that as the ties of kinship become more and more distantly stretched they weaken and that they weaken also by the dilution of kinship with other elements and that both these processes are reflected in the manner in which tribal groups segment. These assertions need explanation. It is very difficult to analyse Nuer society without repetition because when we speak of the tribe we are also speaking of political aggregates which crystallise around some clans. Yet it is imperative to keep these two groups, the tribe and the clan, distinct if endless confusion is to be avoided. Much of the confusion of Jackson's account is due to the fact that he did not
619 clearly differentiate between them.

361 614 Herein lies a great difficulty. The Nuer tribe always has a name derived from the name of the country which it occupies, e.g., one may

619 361 614 speak of Lou tribesmen as *ji looka* (people of Lou), or of Lek tribesmen as *ji legni* (people of Lek); but generally this name is also the name of the clan, for a country is often called after its first occupants and owners, e.g., Gaawär is the name of the tribal territory of the tribesmen who occupy it, and presumably, for I have not been there, of the clansmen who form the dominant element in the tribal territory. GAAJAK and GAAGWANG are clan lineages who have given their names to the countries where they live. To eliminate this difficulty I have throughout written tribes and tribal sections in small letters and clans and clan lineages in capitals. Hence if I say that a man is a Gaawär I mean that he is a man inhabiting Gaawär country, i.e., a member of the Gaawär tribe, whereas if I say that a man is a GAAWÄR I mean that he is a descendant in the male line from Wär, i.e., a member of the GAAWÄR clan. I will give two more examples to make this point quite clear. If you ask a Lou man what is his *cieng*, you are asking him where he lives, what is his homestead, village or district. Suppose that he replies that his *cieng* is *cieng* Pual, you can ask him what his *cieng* forms part of, and he will tell you that it is part of *cieng* Leng, giving the name of a tertiary tribal section. If you continue to interrogate him he will inform you that *cieng* Leng forms part of *cieng* Gaatbal, a secondary tribal section, and he will explain that *cieng* Gaatbal is a division of the Gun primary tribal section which is a moiety of the Lou tribe. But he has told you nothing about his clan relationship. He may or may not be a member of the PUAL clan lineage which forms a part of the LENG lineage, which forms part of the GAATBAL lineage, which forms part of the clan of JINACA or GAAT GAN NACA, the people of Nac or the children of the children of Nac. In the same way, if a Jekany man tells you that he belongs to *cieng* Kwith of the Gaatjok, it does not follow that he is descended from Kwe (Kwith) who is descended from Kun (whose bullock name was majok), but he merely means that he lives in a tribal section occupied by the KWITH lineage which forms part of the tribe occupied by the GAAJOK who are a principal lineage of the GAAT GAN KIIR, the children of the children of Kir. I shall shortly explain the meaning of these lineages.

614 Owing to the fact that the Nuer have no word for clan, as we understand the group, and that they have no stereotyped modes of referring to clansmen, we are in some difficulty in writing about them. The

614

ordinary words for clansmen are composed of the names of the founder with a prefix of *gaat* (children) or *gaat gan* (children of children) or *ji* (people), e.g.,

gaat Wär (GAAWÄR), the children of Wär.
gaat gan Kiir, the children of the children of Kir.
ji Diet, the people of Dit.

My main difficulty arises from my ignorance about the names by which the dominant clans, the *tut* or *diel*, in many tribes are called (e.g., I do not know the names of the founders, nor can I trace the descent of the dominant elements, in such tribes as the Dok, Lek, Nyuong, Jagei, Lak, Bul, etc.). In the case of the Lek and the Dok tribes, which I visited on my first trip to Nuerland, I had unfortunately not formulated the problem of clan descent clearly enough to direct enquiry into it, since I was still shaking myself free from the shackles which a wrongly conceived notion of the *cieng* had fastened upon me. Hence it is rather by analogy than research that I conclude that the *diel* of the Gaawär tribe are the GAAWÄR clan. Often it would seem that the birth name of the founder of a clan or lineage has not been chosen as the title of his descendants, but that they have called themselves after his bullock name. Thus, while one of the major lineages of the JINACA is called GAATBAL after their ancestor Bal, his brother Dak's lineage is called RUMJOK after his bullock name. It is possible that the third brother, Nyaang, is really a bullock name and that his birth name was Liek or Lik, since these descendants are known as GAALIEK (*gaat* Liek—children of Liek or Lik). The lineage of the GAAJAK among the Jekany is doubtless called after the bullock name of their ancestor Mathiang, though this, too, has the appearance of a bullock name (*ma jak* is a bullock with a brown rump, *ma thiang* is a bullock coloured like the thiang). The Lou lineage of NYARKWAC is called after the bullock name of its founder Bang, his bullock being spotted like a leopard (*kwac*) and noted for the manner in which it strutted about sedately (*thak me jale nyarnyar*). MACOK, another Lou lineage, though not a *diel* lineage, is so called because the favourite bullock of its founder was so restless that it had to have its legs bound with cord (*cok*). It is not possible, however, to say with certainty that because a lineage has a bullock name that this was necessarily the bullock name of its founder. It may have been his proper birth name, or it may have been the name of a cow which suckled him, or it may have been the name of a bullock which formed part of the bride-wealth with which his mother was married. Thus I have heard a Nuer suggest that Thiang was *thak me ca kwen man* (the bullock by which his (the lineage founder) mother was married). It is seldom that the Nuer are certain about the origin of such names. The question is, however, one of philological rather than sociological importance. Often I can offer no explanation of the meaning of a lineage cognomen, e.g., the lineages of GAAGWANG and GAAGWONG (*gaat gwang* and *gaat gwong*) among the Jekany. Miss Huffman gives *gwong* for hedgehog and *guong* for guinea fowl and *gwang* for axillary or sound of fish in water, but none of these meanings give a clue to the origin of the lineage names. Jackson (pp. 75–76) suggests the origin of the name Gwang by reference to the Kir cycle of myths and his account of Nuer names in general will give an idea of the innumerable incidents which determine the birth names of Nuer (pp. 171–173). Of Gwang he writes :— 614

> " On the death of Kir, Madjok was appointed by his father as head of the tribe and given the hereditary leopard skin, without which no case of killing can be tried. Matiung and Kunjokjak decided privately not to accept Madjok as their chieftain, but to deprive him of the guardianship of the sacred spear. . . . When this agreement was come to Madjok was outside looking after the cattle, but on his return he at once divined that something was wrong. He spoke to his relations and was greeted with the remark that he was from henceforth of no more account and had been deprived of the leopard skin and sacred spear. . . . His wife shortly afterwards gave birth to a boy named Gwang, i.e., the secret plot." (pp. 75-76.) 614 173 551

I cannot corroborate this tale, but it is a good example of the way in which a Nuer gets his birth name, which then becomes the cognomen of his lineage. It will be noticed in my paper that sometimes lineages are called after women and this is generally evident from the feminine prefix *nya*. I defer discussion on this feature till a paper on Nuer kinship in which setting it will be more easily explained.

What exactly is meant by lineage and clan? One thing is fairly certain, namely, that the Nuer does not think in group abstractions called clans. In fact, as far as I am aware, he has no word meaning clan and you cannot ask a man an equivalent of " What is your clan ? " 614

614 [196] as you can ask a Zande, for example, "*Ngbwatungaro nga da?*" You get at his clan by degrees, if you get at it at all, by asking a man what is his *thok mac* or *thok dwiel* (the hearth of his fire or the entrance to his hut). In my experience the latter expression is the more common and I will use it here. The reader will observe that it is analogous in its literal and extended meanings to the Arabic *khashm el bet*. A man's *thok dwiel* are all those persons of either sex who can trace their descent through males exclusively to a common ancestor. *Thok dwiel* is, therefore, a relative term since its extension depends on the particular person who is selected as the point of departure. Thus if we begin with the father then the *thok dwiel* will include only sons and daughters, but if we take the grandfather as our point of departure it will include all his sons and daughters and the children of his sons. A larger and larger number of agnates (persons related through the male line exclusively) will be included in the term *thok dwiel* the higher up the line of ascent we take the point of departure. Now the Nuer does not generally, if ever, refer to the group of father and children as a *thok dwiel*. These people, together with the mothers, form so obviously a family and household (*gol*). *Thok dwiel* of a man means essentially his father's kinsman and the only question is how far back the Nuer goes up the line of ascent before he hits on an ancestor whose descendants in the male line he includes in his notion of kin. The answer to this question is complicated since there is no invariable rule in the matter and since the notion of kin is relative, more people being included in some contexts than in others by the same speaker.

613 Thus in diagram No. IV W, X, Y, and Z are four sons of S and they sleep in their father's kraal and form part of his family and household (*gol*). Many years later we return to their country and we find that S is long since dead and that his sons, W, X, Y, and Z, have each a family of their own. We may now speak of W, X, Y, and Z, with their sons and daughters as forming a *thok dwiel*, which would be called after S, their common ascendant. In the terminology employed in this paper we would speak of the lineage of S since we are using the term lineage to denote the unilateral group of agnatic kin which the Nuer calls his *thok dwiel*. If you ask any member of this line of descent from S what is his lineage, he will reply that he belongs to the house (*cieng*) of S. Here again it is necessary to re-emphasise that in saying that he belongs

613 is a member of her father's lineage, but her children are of her husband's lineage, hence a woman and her children belong to different lineages—*mulier est finis familiæ*. A lineage, moreover, is not a loose group of people with mutual but undifferentiated relationship, each member extending to all the other members a vague preferential treatment, as is the case with many African clans, but it is a compact group of persons the relationship of any one of whom is different to each other member of the lineage. The exact genealogical position of each member of a lineage in respect to each other member is easily traceable in the network of its genealogical system. Thus, two men, whom we will call A and B, are any two members of the same lineage, but A is not simply B's fellow clansman, his lineal peer, but is related to him by a succession of steps which can be followed by anyone familiar with the ascent of both, i.e., A is perhaps B's father's father's father's brother's son's son's son. We must remember, besides, about the Nuer lineages that many of their members appear by adoption and not by birth and it will be explained later how Dinka captives are incorporated into Nuer lineages by adoption. Lastly, we have to stress the fact that a lineage is always a relative term since it depends upon how far up the line of ascent the ancestor, from whom all members of the lineage are descended, is chosen. Hence, two
613 lineages which are separate and opposite in relation to each other are
614 single and composite in relation to a third. Every male Nuer is (1) a member of his father's lineage, and (2) the potential founder of a lineage of his own. In fact, however, not every Nuer reaches the dignity of being regarded after his death as the founder of their lineage by his descendants and they will not necessarily call their village after his name. Here and there in a group of brothers and cousins one man or one line of descent proves dominant and gives his name to the village in which they all live. The descendants of his brothers and cousins as well as quite unrelated people who have come to live in that village now speak of themselves as members of *cieng* so-and-so and owing to the tendency, which I have already noticed, for the kin who live together to become identified with the village in which they live, all villagers tend to speak as though they have a common lineage even when their claims are quite fictitious. In the case of descendants of brothers of the man after whom the village is called there is, however, a definite merging of the kin into one lineage. In this situation the brothers are regarded

613 as though they were equivalent. Many collateral lines are lost by this
614 process of merging in which they come to regard one of their ancestors
as though he was the common ancestor of them all.

I shall refer in this paper to major lineages and minor lineages. A certain degree of latitude must attach to these expressions since it is impossible, owing to their variations, to use them with complete precision. By minor lineage I mean the ancestor to whom the Nuer refers in answer to your question, what is his *thok dwiel*, i.e., the first descendant in their common line of descent to whom a large number of families refer as their common ancestor and whose name is the name after which their village or district is called. Thus a large number of families in the Lou tribe will tell you, if you ask them what is the name of their *thok dwiel*, that they are members of a *cieng* PUAL (in this sense meaning that they are members of the PUAL lineage). Some of the families may sometimes speak of themselves as members of a lineage called after some ascendant nearer to them than Pual, but this is generally because in the special context in which they are speaking they are contrasting their section of PUAL lineage with another section. On the whole, the normal designation for all these families is *cieng* PUAL and the first emphasis placed upon any ancestor by present-day Nuer of these families is placed upon Pual. By major lineage I mean a larger lineage of which a minor lineage forms only one line of descent among other lines of descent from the same ancestor. Thus Pual is not only the founder and highest ascendant of the lineage called after him, but he is himself the descendant of another lineage. Having discovered that your informant is really a member of PUAL lineage (*see* diagrams Nos. V and VII) and is not merely a man of different descent living among them in their village you can ask him what is the *bab* of *cieng* PUAL, i.e., what is the greater lineage from which the PUAL lineage springs. Your informant will reply that the PUAL lineage forms a section of the GAATBAL lineage and this is what I shall call the major lineage. You can continue to question your informant along these lines by asking him what is the *bab* (the greater lineage) to which the major lineage of the GAATBAL belongs, what is the trunk, as it were, out of which this branch grows. In this particular case your informant will tell you that the GAATBAL are children of Denac, the founder of the clan of the JINACA, but in other cases, your informant may give you a further major lineage before he reaches the clan or main trunk

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SUDAN NOTES AND RECORDS.

PLATE VI.

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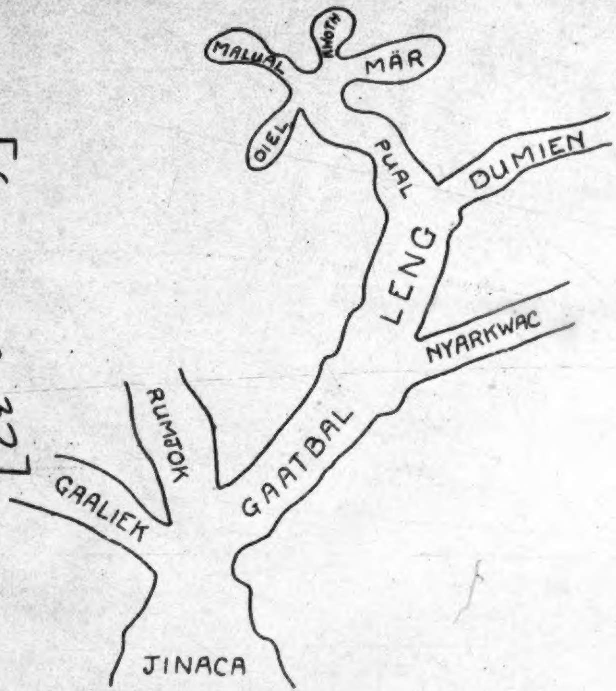
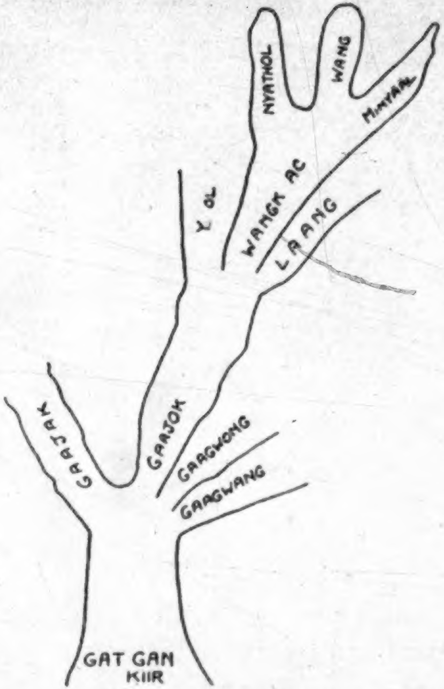
[facing p. 32]



MALUAL
KWOTH
MÄR
DIEL
PUAL
DUMIEN
LENG
NYARKWAC
RUMJOK
GAATBAL
GAALIEK
JINACA

Diagram No. V.
TREE OF DESCENT OF GAATNACA LINEAGE.



NYATHOL
WANG
MINYAAL
WANGK AC
LAANG
Y OL
GAAJAK
GAAJOK
GAAGWONG
GAAGWANG
GAT GAN
KIIR

Diagram No. VI.
TREE OF DESCENT OF GAAT GAN KIIR LINEAGE.

613 from which the different lineages branch out. Similarly, he might have ●614 given you a smaller minor lineage before giving you *cieng* PUAL in answer to your first question, what is his *thok dwiel*; e.g. he might have said that he was a member of the KWOOTH or MALUAL lineages (shown in the accompanying tree, diagram No. V). Each lineage is a branch in relation to the twigs which shoot out from it, but is a twig of the larger branch from which it sprang. The following two trees of descent are appended to illustrate graphically the Nuer system of lineages. One represents a JINACA (Lou tribe) lineage and the other a GAT GAN KIIR (Jekany tribes) lineage. In each diagram only one line of descent is shown from the roots to the twigs, from the clan ancestor to the families of to-day, but the other main branches and boughs, the other major and minor lineages, are indicated where they leave the stem.

These trees and genealogical tables may be compared with the maps (Nos. III, IV, and V)[1] which show the distribution of tribal sections among the Lou tribe and the Eastern Jekany tribes.

614
619 The descendants of Nyaang, son of Denac, form the nucleus of the Gaaliek primary section; the descendants of Bal, sons of Denac, form the nucleus of the Gaatbal primary section; the descendants of Dak, son of Denac, form the nucleus of the Rumjok primary section. The only sections shown on the map which are not accounted for in the genealogical tree and table are the Jaajoak and Jimac sections which have clan nuclei of foreign origin.

We must guard against thinking that because most of the Lou primary sections are called after sons of Denac that they are solely composed of these lineages. This would be a serious error, as in all probability true descendants from Denac in these sections are in a small minority. Large foreign lineages are included in the areas designated by a title taken from any of the sons of Denac (e.g., the THIANG lineage in the Gaatbal primary section) and there are innumerable families of stranger (Nuer) and Dinka descent clustered around families of true GAATNACA origin. Thus, if one visits the villages or cattle camps owned by minor lineages which spring from the GAALIEK major lineage, the lineages of LÖNGNGUĂR, NYAANEN, KUOOK, one will find them occupied by a relatively small number of members of these lineages while most of the residents will be found to have sprung from other Nuer and Dinka clans.

[1] [See facing pp. 10, 18, 30, category 116.-- Analyst]

565 614 619 The descendants of Majok Kiir form the aristocratic nucleus of the Gaajok tribe; the descendants of Mathiang Kiir and Kun Kiir form the aristocratic nucleus of the Gaajak tribe; the descendants of Gwang Majok and Nyang Mathiang form the aristocratic nucleus of the Gaagwang tribe. Thus, on map No. V[1] these lineages are shown as tribal sections, i.e., they have given their names to the tribal sections which have aggregated to them. Here the three main lineages descended from Majok, LAANG, YOL, and WANGKAC, are shown as Laang, Yol, and Wangkac. None of the foreign lineages is of sufficient magnitude to be shown separately, but it must not be supposed for this reason that the descendants of Majok form anything but a fragment of the Gaajok tribe. In the same way the Gaagwang tribe comprises all sorts of foreign elements besides the descendants of Nyang Mathiang[1] and Gwang Majok. The same applies to the Gaajak tribe. As far as my information goes the GAA(T)GWONG lineage are completely united in tribal life with the GAA(T)JAK lineage and so are classified as forming part of the same Gaatjak tribe. In the map the primary sections of Lony, Kang and Tar are all called after descendants of Mathiang and the primary sections of Nyayan, Cany and Wau are all called after descendants of Kun. Hence, in map V, the only section not accounted for in diagram No. VIII[2] is the primary section of Reng,[2] the nucleus of whom are of mixed foreign origin.

614 [682] The clan is the largest lineage which consider themselves as one for purposes of exogamy. This is the minimum definition of a clan. In theory the clan preserves the same form as the smaller lineages which comprise it because it is supposed to be possible to trace the exact genealogical relationship of any member of the clan to any other member of it. Doubtless this can generally be done by a panel of competent genealogists, but most Nuer tend to confusion in the upper stages of ascent and either miss out or misplace names between the ancestor of their clan and the founder of their minor lineage. In consequence of this confusion which is associated with the social functions of clan and lineages there is a tendency for clansmen who do not also belong to the same minor lineage to have an undifferentiated relationship to one another, recognising their kinship to one another through common membership of a social group rather than by genealogical relationship. Hence they tend to recognise

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[1] Nyang was the biological son of Mathiang, but as he was born of one of Kir's wives he is strictly a son of Kir.

[2] I believe that Reng is the bullock-name of Gying, the founder of the most important clan lineage in the Reng primary section of the Gaajak tribe. One of the secondary sections of this tribe is called Dhilleak which is, I think, a bullock-name of Bicuk, son of Gying.

[1] [See facing p. 30, category 116.--Analyst]

[2] [See facing p.36. --Analyst]

[facing p. 34]

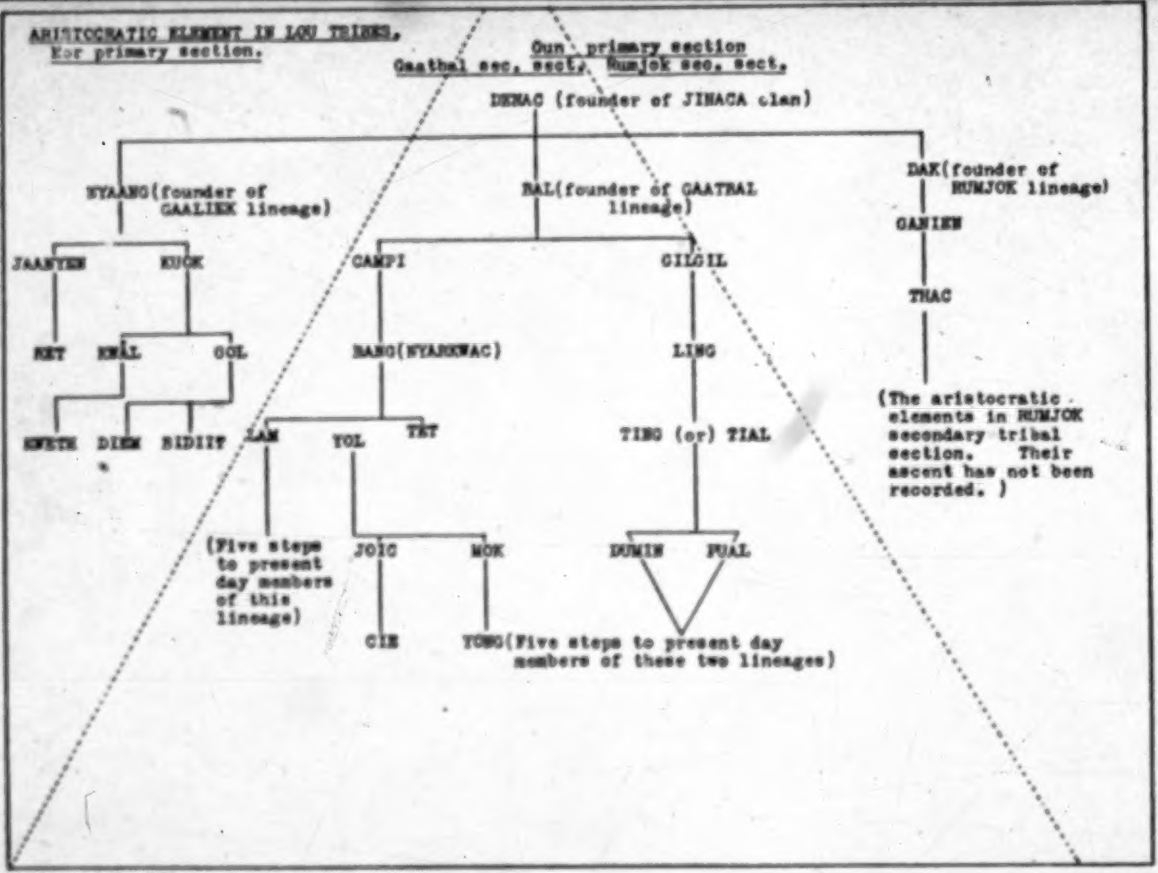
ARISTOCRATIC ELEMENT IN LOU TRIBES.
Kor primary section.
Gun primary section
Gaathal sec. sect.
Rumjok sec. sect.
DENAC (founder of JINACA clan)
NYAANG (founder of GAALIEK lineage)
BAL (founder of GAATBAL lineage)
DAK (founder of RUMJOK lineage)
JAANYEN
KUCK
CAMPI
GILGIL
GANIEN
THAC
RET
KNAL
GOL
BANG (NYARKWAC)
LING
NWETH
DIEM
BIDIIT
LAM
YOL
TET
TING (or) TIAL
(The aristocratic elements in RUMJOK secondary tribal section. Their ascent has not been recorded.)
(Five steps to present day members of this lineage)
JOIC
MOK
DUMIN
PUAL
CIE
YONG (Five steps to present day members of these two lineages)

Diagram No. VII.

Plate VII.

12:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1930-1931) 1933

FJ22 Nuer FJ22

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614 their common kinship by a common sentiment towards the clan name and ritual symbols and by the prohibition of marriage between their
[613] families. But when they belong to the same minor lineage they recognise their kinship by awareness of the exact relationship in which they stand to one another in the genealogical system. Nevertheless any competent Nuer genealogist can, if pressed, produce a good table of genealogical ascent to the founder of his clan with the result that it is possible, even in such a huge clan as the GAT GAN KIIR of the Jekany tribes, to place every single clansman and clanswoman on a single genealogical chart showing their genealogical descent from Kir and, therefore, the genealogical relationship of any clansman to any other clansman. Such a chart would not be likely to embody a correct genealogy, but it would be recognised by the Nuer as being substantially correct.

614 Consequently one cannot say that relationship ends with the clan
619 or that it is the largest of Nuer lineages, but we have to define it as the largest exogamous lineage. For the common ancestor of most Nuer clans is the same person. Jackson has given a very good account of the way in which the Nuer clans are part of a related system which I propose to call the Family of Nuer Clans. It is necessary to say that it is not at all clear from Jackson's or other accounts, including my own notes, how this family of clans are inter-related. It is particularly a problem which requires detailed research among the "Homeland Nuer" to the west of the Nile. One of the reasons why it is difficult to draw more than an approximate tree of the Family of Nuer Clans is the confusion which has always existed between the tribe and the clan, with the inevitable result that when we are told that Lou or Lak are sons of such-and-such an ancestor we are helpless, since tribesmen of Lou and Lak form political aggregates of composite ancestry and cannot possibly have common ancestors. What is meant is that the dominant clan element of the tribe are the sons of the such-and-such an ancestor, but as his tree of descent is not given it is difficult to proceed upon such a supposition.

614 I will condense here the main discoveries of Mr. Jackson in this field,
173 together with the writings of the late Capt. Fergusson and notes taken
773 by myself. There figure in all accounts certain mythical persons who
[776] link the ancestors of the Nuer clans to Kwoth, God, who made them and from whom they are directly descended. In this essay the first persons we need notice are Gee and Ghaak, two brothers who are possibly to be

614 173 773 regarded as historical personages. According to Jackson's account, from A'ak (his spelling for Ghaak) are sprung Nuong, Dok, Jaluk, Qwei (Beiq (Gad) Quaish)[1] (spellings in this paper are Nyuong, Dok, Jaluk, Kwe, Beegh, Gaatkwac, for these tribes) and from Ga'a (Jackson's spelling of Gee) are sprung Bor,[2] Lang,[2] Raiyung,[3] Wott,[2], Ror,[2] Bull, Leiq,[3] Lak,[3] Tiung,[3] Lau,[3] Keirluwal[3] (spellings in this paper are Bör, Läng, Rengyan, Wot, Ror, Bul, Lek, Lak, Thiang, Lou, Kärlual, for these tribes). All the Nuer clans, with few exceptions, fit into this family. It is not at all clear, however, from Jackson's account who are the ancestors of many of the clans he lists, since he speaks of tribes as though they were clans. And, indeed, the Nuer himself often speaks in the same manner, identifying linguistically the tribe with the dominant clan element of the area in which it lives. Thus they may speak of Lou as being descended from Denac when what they mean is that the dominant clan of Lou country are descendants from Denac. It is, therefore, impossible at present to draw up a genealogical table which will show the descent of all the Nuer clans who spring from Gee and his brother. On the eastern side of the Nile, among the Lou, at any rate, one only hears of Gee and not of his brother. In this tribe people speak as though you were either a pure Nuer descended ultimately from Gee or a Dinka or a descendant of Wär or Kir.

Kir, the founder of the GAT GAN KIIR, who form the nucleus of the Jikany tribes, was, according to all accounts, found in a gourd by the Ngok Dinka and was brought up by them. He later married three daughters of Gee by whom he gave birth to the major lineages of his clan, the GAAJOK, the three GAAJAK, and the GAAGWONG. The GAT GAN KIIR clan is, therefore, attached through its mothers to the lineage of Gee.

All accounts equally agree in saying that Wär, the ancestor of the GAAWÄR clan, who are, presumably, the dominant element in the Gaawär tribe, fell down from heaven. Jackson says that he was brought up by A'ak and that his descendants are considered to have attached themselves to the Ghaak division of the Nuer nation.

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[1] Jackson says that Beiq and Quaish belong to A'ak, but he does not give A'ak as their ancestor in the following paragraph nor in his genealogical tables, *id.* pp. 72 and 79.

[2] All born of the same mother. All west bank tribes.

[3] Najh, Reill and Tiung are three sons of one mother. Najh is the ancestor of Raiyung and Lau and Reill the ancestor of Keirlual, Leiq and Lak.

[facing p. 36]

Aristocratic element in Jekany tribes.

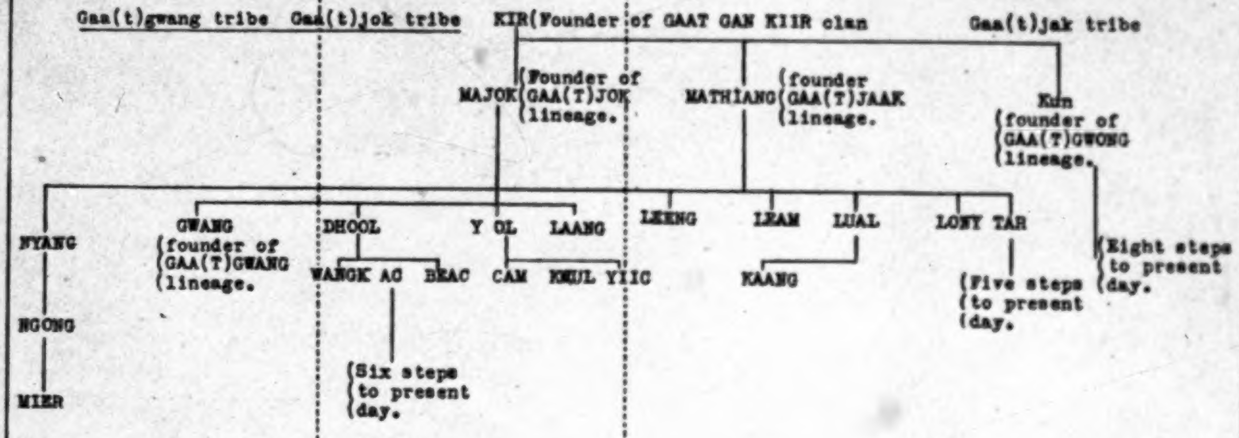
Gaa(t)gwang tribe
Gaa(t)jok tribe
KIR (Founder of GAAT GAN KIIR clan
Gaa(t)jak tribe
MAJOK (Founder of GAA(T)JOK lineage.
MATHIANG (founder GAA(T)JAAK lineage.
Kun founder of GAA(T)GWONG lineage.
NYANG
NGONG
MIER
GWANG (founder of GAA(T)GWANG (lineage.
DHOOL
WANGK AC
BEAC
Six steps to present day.
Y OL
LAANG
CAM
KNUL YIIC
LEENG
LEAM
LUAL
KAANG
LONY TAR
Five steps to present day.
Eight steps to present day.

Diagram No. VIII

PLATE VIII.

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614 The ancestor of the JIKUL clan is also said to have fallen down from
173 heaven, and Jackson says that he was fostered by Gee to whose division
773 his descendants considered themselves attached. Nowhere do they form a dominant clan element in a tribe but are scattered among many tribes.

The late Capt. Fergusson speaks of these two national divisions as Ghraark and Gair. On the western bank Ghraark are Nuong, Adok, and Gwai; and Gair are Bul, Lake, Jakaing, Bur, Naijh, Wad, and Lung.[1]

Considering the confusion which has existed between clan and tribe,
619 Jackson's classification into the Gee and Ghaak[2] groups cannot be
614 regarded as exact though it may well be conventional. I was given a somewhat similar division myself by a man from the west bank of the Nile. But it appears at first sight that there are two pertinent criticisms of the classification. In the first place several clans are obviously missing, e.g., JIDIET and JIMEM. In the second place it is doubtful what line of descent is reckoned when speaking of a tribe as descended from Gee or Ghaak, e.g., the Lak tribe apparently comprises two main lineages, *gaat twot* Dok, children of Dok aristocrats, and *gaat nya* Legni, children of Lek aristocrats through the female line and of doubtful parentage through the male line. Whilst, even if this is correct, they would both belong to the Gee group of clans in a conventional grouping it is of some importance to know their exact mode of descent.[3] Under the circumstances we can only make a conventional classification which is a mixture of clan and tribal units and wait till further research elucidates the true state of affairs. It is possible that the Family of Nuer Clans is correctly described in confused and hazy terms, since it may well be conceived by the Nuer without logical system. For it may be pointed out that errors are often not the fault of observers like Jackson or myself but are due to the hazy notions which the Nuer themselves have about their ancestry, at any rate on collateral lines. Thus one well-informed man told me that the aristocratic lineages of Lou, Rengyan, and Thiang tribes are all descended from Denac by his three

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[1] Unpublished Government report.

[2] Besides A'ak (Jackson) and Ghraark I have heard the name Gwea, and one old man said that there were three brothers, Gee, Ghaak, and Gwea—Ghaak producing the aristocratic lineages in Kwe, Jaluk, Begh countries, and Gwea producing the aristocratic lineages in Dok, Nyuong, Gaakwar, and Rol countries.

[3] One informant, Tut, said that the Gaawar tribe count as belonging to the Ghaak group and the Lak tribe as belonging to the Gee group, though it is difficult to know exactly what he meant.

619 sons Bany (bull(ock) name *ma low*), Yini (bull(ock) name *ma rengyan*) and
614 Thiang, a genealogy which differs from those already given in this paper. Only detailed research by several observers in different areas can finally solve the problems, for solutions cannot be deduced satisfactorily from our present data.

In our account of the tribe we explained how a continual process of fission is going on and how when we speak of a tribe we are using a relative term, since it is difficult to know whether we should speak of a single tribe with moieties or of two separate tribes. Exactly the same process of segmentation is going on within the clan, since a tribe is a political aggregation round a clan or clan lineage. Thus the clan, like its political superstructure the tribe, is also going through a constant process of integration and segmentation. Division into lineages here corresponds with territorial division into tribal sections. Our statement that the larger the territorial area covered by a tribe or a tribal segment the weaker its cohesion finds its kinship counterpart in the tendency for the solidarity of a lineage to weaken the more it expands. Weakening bonds of kinship re-enforce spacial division in destroying communal interests in tribal life just as spacial division re-enforces widening kinship breaches in undermining community of blood. For example, the division of the Lou into two moieties of Mor and Gun is not simply a political and spacial division but is also a kinship cleavage between the descendants of three sons of Denac, Nyang, Dak and Bal, or to state the position in other terms, the division between the sons of Nyang, Dak, and Bal is not simply a creation of genealogical distance but also of political and spacial distance.

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614
621 The clan itself has practically no social cohesion; a major lineage has greater cohesion than the clan of which it forms part but less cohesion than one of the minor lineages into which it is divided. A minor lineage has great solidarity as has the village or district which represents the minor lineage with its political aggregate clustered around it. Here close ties of blood are backed up by community of daily life. Thus the GAT NACA display little communal feeling in their social behaviour, the major lineage of GAATBAL on the contrary, owing to their symbiosis, their common political and economic interests, and their close kinship bonds, show a much stronger tendency to regard themselves as a distinct social group.

12;Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1930-1931) 1933

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A minor lineage like the PUAL lineage of the GAATBAL are a community really well knit by common residence and blood who lead a common economic, political and social life. If one takes a smaller lineage still, like the MAR lineage (see diagram No. V), one reaches the strongest unilateral unit in Nuer society, a unit whose members herd their cattle by communal arrangements; who build their huts contiguously and cultivate gardens side by side; who act as a blood revenge group in case of the homicide of one of their kin; who assist one another in providing cattle for marriage or homicide payments; who act as assistants at all important ceremonies; and who in general co-operate as a mutual assistance society for all purposes of social insurance. At least this is how I understand the relative cohesion of clan segments, though I feel that there is a leaning towards theoretical conclusions not adequately supported by a strong foundation of facts in my presentation. 613 621

The difference between kinship groups and political groups and their interwoven structures may now be demonstrated by a simple diagram though our definitions of groups are too elastic to permit an exact correlation between kinship and political units. 613 614 619 621 631

DIAGRAM No. IX.

Clan + aggregate of strangers „ „ = Tribe.
Major Clan lineage + aggregate of strangers = {Primary tribal section.
Minor „ „ „ „ = {Secondary tribal section. Tertiary tribal section.

We have the same difficulty in deciding in some cases whether to speak of two clans or of one clan with two major lineages as we had in deciding whether to speak of two tribes or one tribe with two moieties. Thus the JINACA are descended from Denac or Nac. So also are the RENGYAN and perhaps also the THIANG[1]. All these people are therefore JINACA, the people of Nac. Are we, therefore, to speak of them as one clan or as three clans? In other words, can a man of the Lou JINACA marry a woman from the Rengyan JINACA? At present I have no means of deciding this question since Lou and Rengyan are so far apart that normally the question of intermarriage would not arise. It is impossible even to express an opinion on the matter until we know something about the genealogies of the Rengyan JINACA. If they belong to the same major lineages as the Lou JINACA, namely the lineages of GAALIEK, RUMJOK and GAATBAL, we 614

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[1] I write RENGYAN and THIANG in capitals, though correctly speaking I suppose we should write the JINACA of Rengyan and Thiang tribes.

614 may safely regard them as one clan. This is possibly the case, since the Lou JINACA left their homes in Rengyan to conquer their present tribal area. On the other hand they may represent a distinct line of descent from Denac. There is not the same certainty as there is for the history of the children of Kir, a part of whom journeyed from their home on the Bahr-el-Ghazel to the tribal areas of the Eastern Jikany. The GAAJOK, GAAJAK, GAAGWONG and GAAGWANG major lineages are found both among the Eastern Jikany and the Western Jikany, and they still belong to one clan, since a man of the Eastern GAAJOK lineage may not marry a woman of the Western GAAJAK or GAAGWONG lineages. It is possible that in time the GAAJOK lineage of the GAT GAN KIIR clan will split away from the GAAJAK lineage and that two separate clans will be formed by fission. The Nuer themselves speak as though this may happen since they say that a GAAJOK man may "not yet" marry a GAAJAK woman. "*Ngote thicha,*" "they are still close" (in relationship), say the Nuer, suggesting that it will one day be possible, a suggestion in keeping with their acceptance of a scheme of clans all ultimately descended from Gee. I have found that informants lay great stress on the fact that Gee bisected a bullock and thus enabled the clans descended from him to intermarry whereas Kir did not perform similar ritual, with the result that intermarriage between the clans descended from him is prohibited. Nevertheless I cannot produce a sure example of clans splitting into two or more exogamous lineages. Even when political fission takes place as between the Gaajok and the Gaajak the clan maintains its unity, and a GAAJOK man and a GAAJAK man are still members of a single exogamous clan.

IV.

641 614 619 All tribesmen live in the same country. A man may emigrate to another country, but if he settles there he and his children become members of the tribe among whom he has settled. When we speak of the Lou and Rengyan we speak of the people who live in Lou and Rengyan countries. Clansmen on the other hand do not all live in the same country, the great majority of them may do so but not all of them. Thus probably the majority of JINACA live in Lou country and Rengyan country, but by no means all of them live there. Many JINACA live scattered among other tribes. Moreover the number of JINACA clansmen who live

12;Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1930-1931) 1933

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in Lou country and Rengyan country forms only a small proportion of the 641
total population of Lou and Rengyan tribesmen. Again, Gaajok country 614
contains a dominant element of GAT GAN KIIR clansmen of GAAJOK 619
lineage, but they are dominant in the Gaajok tribe on account of their traditional ownership of the country and not on account of numerical superiority, for they probably compose only a small minority of the tribe. Also not all the GAAJOK live in Gaajok country in the Eastern Jekany area, since a large part of the lineage live in the Gaajok primary tribal section of the Jekany tribe to the west of the Nile and smaller lineages of the GAAJOK are scattered throughout most, if not all, Nuer tribes. The GAAJOK form an excellent illustration of this difference between clan and tribe, since the GAAJOK of the Eastern Jekany and the GAAJOK of the Western Jekany cannot obviously be fellow tribesmen on account of the vast area which separates their countries and since they never act together in any collective undertaking. On the other hand they are [512]
equally descended from Majok the son of Kir and hence are all members of the same lineage of the same clan. For this reason they are all brothers and sisters and forbidden to intermarry.

But though the clan is not a territorial group nevertheless many clans are largely localised. Thus the descendants of Mathiang are mainly living in the two countries of Eastern and Western Gaajak. The descendants of Nac are mainly living in Lou and Rengyan countries, and the descendants of Wär are, I presume, mainly living in Gaawär country. But this by no means holds for all clans. There is no tribal area in which the JIMEM mainly live or in which they have the position of owners of the soil, but they are scattered far and wide throughout the length and breadth of Nuerland. The same is true of the KIAN, JIDIET, [illegible] and JIKUL, and a number of other clans.

When a clan is mainly localised in one tribal area it forms an aristo- 614
cratic element there. The JINACA of Lou country lived originally with 619
the JINACA of Rengyan country, but they split off from them and 554
conquered Lou country from the Dinka. Here they were the first occu- 565
pants, or more correctly the strongest element among the first occupants, and became "owners" of the country. Any other clansmen who came to live in Lou tribal area had to attach themselves on to the JINACA. The GAT GAN KIIR clan moved from their homeland to the west of the Nile and conquered the land, which they own to-day, on the eastern side of the

614 Nile, from the Dinka, and settled there as lords of the country. I think
619 that it will probably be correct to say that every Nuer tribal area has its
554 *diel* (sing-*dil*) clan owners, aristocrats, dominant element, but that not
565 every clan has an area in which they are *diel*. There are possibly countries on the west bank of the Nile in which more than one clan rank as *diel*. Though it has not been recorded that such a system exists among the Dinka it is worth mentioning that the Nuer tell one that the Dinka also speak of *diel* in their various tribes, *e.g.*, they talk of *dil thoini* and *dil luaica*, members of the clans which own Thoc and Luac tribal areas respectively.

The great point to remember about Nuer *diel* is that a man is a *dil* only in the country owned by his clan. Thus a member of the JINACA or GAATNACA is a *dil looka*, that is to say, that he is a *dil* in Lou country but nowhere else. If he moves to Gaajok country he ceases to be a *dil* and becomes instead a *rul* or stranger. He may still call himself a *gat dila looka*, a Lou aristocrat, but he does not count as a *dil*, aristocrat, in Jekany countries. In the same way a *dil Jekany* is a direct descendant in the male line from Kir, but when such a man crosses Lou country he becomes a *rul* or stranger. *Dil* therefore means a member of the clan which owns the country in which he lives. Hence members of a clan such as the JIMEM or JIKUL which have no tribal territory of which they can call themselves masters are nowhere *diel*. One may nevertheless speak of a *dil* JIMEM in the sense of a "real" or "pure" member of this clan in contrast to Dinka who have attached themselves to it.

614 I do not wish to be misunderstood when I speak of a tribal aristocracy
619 based on a clan predominance in a tribal area. The Nuer are intensely
554 democratic and the idea of one man lording it over the others is abhorrent
565 to them. However there is a prestige in being a *dil* of the country in which
[181] you live. Your clan are owners of the country, its village sites, its pastures, its fishing pools and wells, and other people live there by virtue of marriage or adoption into your lineage or because they are prepared to recognise your hereditary status and to join your local group on the understanding that they are strangers and on sufferance. It is the spear-name of your clan which is shouted when the tribe makes war. In some tribes
[632] the advantage of being an aristocrat are more concrete. Among the Eastern Jekany tribes the blood-money which is paid for a slain *dil* is apparently higher than for any other Nuer who may be killed in the same

countries. There is some doubt about the exact organisation of blood- 614 ●
cattle (*cut*) in old times. This uncertainty is partly accounted for by the 619
undoubted elasticity of assesement, for we should make a mistake in 554
supposing that the number of cattle paid over in compensation for 565
homicide was invariably the same or that there was a rigid definition of 682
social status. It is also partly accounted for by the fact that the *cut* was
not identical in every Nuer tribe. The evidence seems to show that the
greatest differentiation in assessment of blood-cattle between different
classes in the community was to be found on the periphery of Nuer culture,
among the Eastern Jekany, where the greatest absorption of foreigners
has taken place. There I was given the following table of assessment for 554
a late (probably post-European) period in their history :— 614

Gat dila Jikany (a member of the GAT GAN KIIR clan), 619
15 cows and 5 bullocks (20). 682

Gat Geeka (a member of any pure Nuer clan), 563
12 cows and 5 bullocks (17).

Jaang dila (a Dinka who has permanently settled in Nuer country and has attached himself to a Nuer social group),
11 cows and 5 bullocks (16).

Jaang (a Dinka, pure and simple, who has not yet become a permanent member of Nuer society),
8 cows and 2 bullocks (10).

In the old days it appears that 40 cattle was the regular payment for homicide in the case of a member of the dominant clan in Jikany countries, and for this pre-European period I was given the following table :—

GAT GAN KIIR	40 cattle.
Gat Geeka	40 cattle.
Jaang buthni (an adopted Dinka)	20 cattle.
Jaang (Dinka—unadopted) ...	6 cattle.

There is one main discrepancy between the first and second tables. In the second a pure Nuer of any clan is classed as the same for purposes of blood-cattle as a member of the GAT GAN KIIR clan, while in the first he is classed lower. I was never able to make up my mind which of these two estimates—I have been given others which differ slightly from both—was the correct one since, while members of the GAT GAN KIIR clan in Jikany country assured me that payment for killing a member of any other Nuer clan in their country was less than for killing a member of their

12:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1930-1931) 1933

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554 own clan, members of these other clans, who here count as *rul* or strangers,
● 614 assured me that payments in both cases were equal. Assurances on both
619 sides were clearly coloured by recent practice which has been based on
682 government rulings at different times and by what regulations they hoped
563 the Government would institute in the future. On the whole I consider that there was probably a differentiation between members of the dominant clan and members of other clans, but that the differentiation was not rigid and depended upon the special circumstances of each case, when length of residence in the country, marriage alliances with members of the dominant clan, and so on, were taken into consideration.

Quite definitely, however, there was a clear difference made between Nuer and Dinka in the assessment of blood-cattle compensation. This difference is found all over Nuer country, though there seems to have been difference of opinion in different parts of Nuerland about what constitutes a Dinka for purposes of homicide payments. Among the Lou the practice was to class members of the dominant clan, the JINACA, and members of the other Nuer clans together and make 40 cattle (32 cows and 8 bullocks) the regular payment for both. The son of a Dinka born in Lou country was considered to have become a Nuer (*caa Nath*) and his death was also compensated for by 40 cattle ; but a captured Dinka or visiting Dinka or a Dinka who had taken up his abode in the country was reckoned as a *Jaang* and was compensated by only 6 cattle (4 cows and 2 bullocks). A Dinka even when given *buth* appears to have counted as *Jaang* and not as *Nath*, but his children were reckoned as Nuer for homicide purposes. Two informants told me that in Jagei country on the west bank of the Nile compensation for homicide was reckoned as follows :—

Gat diel (members of the dominant clan in the tribe),
34 cows and 6 bullocks (40).
Rul who has built his cattle-byre,
34 cows and 6 bullocks (40).
Rul and *Jaang* who have not built their cattle-byre,
6 cows and 4 bullocks (10).

The point of stressing the building of a cattle-byre was that a man who built one, whether a Nuer stranger or a Dinka, had obviously come to stay and became a permanent member of your social group and a member of your village. He became "your man" (*randu*), who owed you a kind of allegiance and who relied on your protection. Hence he is assessed on

the same footing as an ordinary resident born into the community. On 554
the other hand I was told by some Eastern Jekany Nuer at Nasser that 614
once a Dinka always a Dinka was the rule, and that the children and 619
grandchildren of Dinkas never counted as equal to pure Nuer in blood- 682
cattle assessment. I regard this statement, however, as being, in all 563
probability, too rigidly formulated.

The second element in a Nuer village are the *rul*. A *rul* is a stranger, 554
one who is not a member of the *diel*, one who has no place in the lineage 614
of the dominant clan. Such people may be more numerous than the clan 619
itself but they have not the same hereditary status in the tribe. 173
Sometimes their lineages compose powerful tribal sections and in these 773
sections they form a dominant lineage of their own. They are linked by sociological ties, often mythological in form, to the *diel* of the tribe. Thus the powerful sections of Reng and Kōng of the Gaajak tribe are not *diel* but *rul*. The Reng section is united to the genealogy of Kir by the supposition that Reng the founder of some of its lineages (Col and Dhilleak) was equivalent to *gat manlen* (mother's sister's son) to Kir, his mother being a sister to the Ngok Dinka woman who nursed Kir and brought him up, while the founder of another lineage of this section, the Kōng, was a man called Tik, who is described in the Kir myths as having given him supernatural assistance and saved his life from avengers. The Jemac and Jaajoah clans, which give their names to two secondary tribal sections[1] of the Lou tribe, are not of the dominant Lou clan, the Jinaca, but are nuclei of two large segments which, together with the Gaaliek section, comprise the Mor moiety. Here again there is a myth which unites them to the *diel* of the tribe. Denac (Nac) is said to have had four sons, Yim, Dak, Bai and Bany, by one wife, and Nyaang and two brothers, who are nameless, by another wife. Nyaang's two brothers were killed by a strange monster, which figures often in Nuer mythology, and is known as a *let*. When the sons of Denac went fishing the four full brothers went on their own and Nyaang by himself, for he would not accompany his brothers. Consequently when he caught a fish someone would come and steal it from him as he was all by himself. When he came home he would not sit on the ground facing his father as the other sons did but sat apart by himself with his back to his father and gazing in the opposite direction. When his father asked him what was the matter with him, he replied that he was thinking of his two

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[1] In the Jemac section are included the important Jaaoweth lineage who are supposed to be distantly related to the Jemac.

554 brothers whom the *let* had eaten. His father said to him, "Never mind,
● 614 take your two sisters and let them be your brothers." So in future when
619 Nyaang went fishing he went with his sisters Nyabil and Fadwai. Nyaang
173 is the founder of the GAALIEK lineage, Nyabil of the JEMAC lineage,
773 Fadwei of the JAAJOAH lineage. Whenever we find large sections living as *rul* in a tribe we may expect to discover that bonds have been created between them and the *diel* by myths of the kind cited above. This mythological patent gives them a status in the tribe which is nearly equal to that of the *diel* and amounts to adoption into their kinship framework.
[611] This is often accomplished in Nuer society through the kinship value of the mother's line, for although lineages are, for purposes of descent, reckoned widest through the male line and comprise only agnates in respect to the inheritance of certain clan heirlooms, nevertheless descent through the female line has powerful recognition and there is a tendency for the kinship group to take the form of an association of cognates, of men and their sons and daughters and the children of sons and daughters. When strangers come to live in the village of *diel* and marry into their families there is always a drive towards matrilocal conditions, and descent through the mother is stressed so that the lineage of the strangers' sons is traced to the mother and through her linked to the clan of *diel*. We have already cited a good example of this process in the case of the JEMAC and JAAJOAH clans who trace their descent to the name of their ancestresses while the names of their husbands have been forgotten. Nevertheless, in spite of this, they form separate exogamous groups since they cannot be members of the clan of their ancestresses. They are *gaat nyal*, children of daughters, in contrast to *gaat twot*, children of "bulls" or children of sons. However, in some respects the original daughter who gave birth to the stranger's lineage is treated as though she had been a son, as the myth about Nyaang explicitly states, so that the lineage which springs from her still grows on her own genealogical tree. In this way there is always a tendency to translate bonds of contiguity into bonds of kinship.

554 Not all strangers form such important lineages as the THIANG, JEMAC,
614 JAAJOAH (Lou tribe), GAAT TIEK, GAAT KEANG (Gaajak tribe). Many
619 *rul* are members of small lineages of strangers living in the midst of other
621 small foreign lineages all of which are aggregated around a nucleus of
gaat twot. Thus in Lou country, among the Lou aristocratic element, the

JINACA, one finds many members of such clans as the JIMEM, JUAK, 554
KIEK, KWERMOANG, in every section. These clans have no longer a *wec* 614 ●
(a home) of their own. Thus there is a story that the JIMEM once had 619
a big *wec* but when some of them were absent their food was eaten by their 621
brothers. This led to a quarrel, which resulted in the dispersal of the [173]
clan, and now, like the other clans mentioned above, they have no central homeland. There is, however, said to be a small JIMEM pocket near Lek country.

In the migration of the Nuer eastwards across the Nile there does 721
not appear to have been any systematic colonisation, if we except the 167
Jekany occupation of Dinkaland. Parties of warriors would raid the 614
nearest Dinka homesteads and carry off their boys and girls and cattle. These warriors at first returned home with their spoil but later a portion of them settled down with their wives and families and built homesteads to the east of the Nile, where they were still in touch with their relatives across the river. Slowly there was a drift further and further eastwards, and whilst the bulk of the conquering warriors belonged to one clan originally there followed a steady infiltration from other clans whose members attached themselves to the original conquerors and settled among them. Also it must be presumed that before the Nuer crossed the Nile and conquered the Dinka country, which lay to the east of that river, some clans were already nuclei of political aggregation from other clans and from Dinka not unlike the aggregations which we find of the west bank of the Nile to-day. At the present time, moreover, families move freely about the country and attach themselves to new local groups into which they marry. Especially does this seem to be the case among the Western Nuer where there is a perfect jumble of small clan lineages. The link between newcomers and the lineages among which they settle is not so much the link of marriage as of descent, since the birth of a child unites the two families of husband and wife by a genealogical link and the sons of the wife become children of the husband's lineage and sister's children of the wife's lineage.

The manner in which lineages split up was well described to me by a 614
Dok man. Members of a lineage give birth to children and they become numerous and spread over the countryside, wandering here and there and everywhere (*cike dah piny*). Then their close relationship (*mar*) ends (*ci mar thuk*). They go and live in the midst of other clans who are

614 distantly related to them (*cike uth ko ji bothna okien*). Here they dwell as friends (*wane ngac kō rō*) and slowly forge new relationship by intermarriage (*ca mar mat ɛ ken*).

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621 I believe that there is another Nuer word which means the same as *rul*, namely, *yian*. Thus one speaks of strangers living in the village of *diel* as *yiankien*, " their strangers dwelling in their midst." They are strangers because they have no hereditary status in the *wec* save through their mothers. Nevertheless *rul* and *yian* are objectionable terms by which to address strangers and would not be used without danger of strong words following. In speech they are assimilated to the dominant lineages and in this way the homogeneity and cohesion of the local group is asserted. One does not make a division between people who live with one, share one's cattle camp and village, help one in feuds, and quarter their herds in common pastures. Hence even if a man is a *rul* (or a *yian*) one does not make allusion to the fact in his presence. Still less does one make allusion to a man's Dinka or other non-Nuer parentage by calling him by the offensive term *jaang*. These strangers are accepted as equal members of the *wec*.

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621 One of my informants, Jok, explained modes of Nuer aggregation very clearly. No *dil* (or *tut*) dwells in a social milieu entirely composed of fellow *diel* (*gaat twot*), for the usual tendency is for *diel* to split up and for the segments to seek political autonomy on their own and found their own social conglomerate in which they will form the aristocratic nucleus. Hence a *wec* has its nucleus of *diel*, and around this nucleus are gathered a host of *rul*, who are often the husbands of daughters and sisters of *diel* who have not left the village of their fathers and brothers on their marriages but whose husbands have built their homesteads in their wives' localities. It is important to bear in mind that these girls cannot marry a *dil* or *tut* but are compelled by exogamous rules to marry into the classes of *rul* and *jaang*. Their children often grow up in the village of their maternal grandfather and his lineage are regarded as their kinsmen while their father's lineage are comparative strangers, and for this reason they tend to trace their descent through their mother rather than through their father and thus hitch on to the genealogical system of the *diel*.

614
619 Hence there is always a tendency towards fusion between two lineages who form part of the same tribal section. This is not simply due to the fact that there is often a real or mythological relationship between

the ancestor of one lineage and the ancestress of the other (as with the 614
JINACA and the JIMAC), but is owing also to the fact that their two 619
sections continue to intermarry all the way down their line of descent, since the marriage of a man of lineage A into lineage B does not prevent his cousin marrying into lineage B also. In course of time the two lineages become so intermarried that it is impossible for them to continue to intermarry without breaking exogamous rules. Thus I was told that the GAALIEK lineage (*diel*) and the JEMAC lineage (*rul*) in the Mor moiety of the Lou tribe had reached a stage when a GAALIEK man could no longer marry a JEMAC woman, though he might marry a descendant of a JIMAC woman two or three generations removed.

As we shall see later, captured Dinka are adopted into Nuer families, 641
and as they have no cattle they necessarily depend for sustenance and 577
marriage upon the family of their adoption. They forge descent through 614
the men who have adopted them and their lineage becomes grafted on to the genealogical tree of descent of their foster fathers so that their children count for most purposes as *gaat twot*. Often *rul* and *jaang* who are poor will come and live near a generous man of whom it is said "He is poor and has nothing because he has given everything away"—a great compliment. Such dependants will be provided with marriage-cattle by their patrons and they will bring their wives to the *wec* of the man who has befriended them, and here their children will be brought up as children of the *wec* and count almost as *gaat twot* since they were born through the cattle of a *tut*.

A lineage of *diel* split up as a result of internal dissension and also 614
because a man of personality likes to found his own independent settle- 620
ment where he will be an important person rather than remain a younger 621
brother in a group of influential elder relatives. This, Jok told me, is a reason why the *Nuer* are dissatisfied with the present arrangements made by the Government, which have as their object the creation of local "chiefs" whose position tends to become formalised, permanent, and hereditary. To them this is a rigid interpretation of political power based on a territorial rather than personal basis which stabilises the control of a single man or lineage in a country where every *Nuer* carries his baton in his knapsack. It does not follow that a man must be a *dil* to gain influence among his fellow villagers. He may be a *tut* of some other lineage than the dominant lineage of his tribe who has been able to

624 634 621 establish himself and his near kin as the social leaders of the locality in which they live. Also I believe that the common view expressed by Europeans that the Nuer leopard-chiefs were once powerful political chiefs whose power has lately been undermined by Arab influence and the development of lines of influential prophets and that their power must be re-established is based on a one-sided appreciation of the facts (*see* section No. VII).

621 563 597 727 We have seen that two elements in a Nuer village are the *diel wec* and the *rul wec*. The third element in a Nuer village is the Dinka *jaang wec* and this falls into two types, captured Dinka and Dinka who have come to live among the Nuer of their own free will. Boys and girls captured in war—for adults are usually put to the spear, only very small boys and unmarried maidens being carried off to Nuerland—are brought up as children of their captor's household and treated as his own sons and daughters. Two of my informants, Jok and Tutrial, gave me a very clear summary of the position of a captured Dinka. Their captor in no way distinguishes them and his own sons and daughters, and neither he nor any of his family would refer to them as *Jaang* (Dinka), which is a term of deep contempt and insult. They do precisely no more and no less work than any other member of the household and are in no manner degraded or humiliated. In answer to my questions whether a captured Dinka would not be expected to do more hoeing or tending of the cattle than children of the family, my informant's reply was decisively clear "You ask me whether he would not work harder than the sons, well, is he not a son?"

[illegible] you would not address your captive as "Jaang," he replied with some impatience at my denseness "Are you likely to do such a thing? Now listen, be quiet and I will tell you. When you marry a woman with cattle and sleep in the same hut with her does anyone come and ask you why you sleep so late in the day? Now when you go out to capture a Dinka your foot is pierced by thorns—you have got to be stalwart for that; you are ravished by hunger—you have got to be stalwart for that; you have spears thrown at you—you have got to be stalwart for that too; now I ask you when you have got your Dinka are you likely to call him a *Jaang*? Did you not win him because you were strong?"

Leopard-skin chiefs are usually men from certain lineages and, although they are not all members of the same clan, they are believed to have a kind of kinship through their office. The leopard-skin chief, unlike similar ritual officials in other Nilotic groups, does not represent or symbolise the unity and exclusiveness of any political group. 791 624

The Elders

The elders of a local community provide leadership and advice when required. Prestige and influence do not come with age alone, however; a man of outstanding reputation is called *tut* (bull), a term used to refer to men of high social standing who belong to lineages other than those of the dominant clan. A *tut* is head of a family and in charge of a homestead and a herd of cattle; he has the support of a large number of relatives and, in addition, he must be an able man with personality. 554

The *gat twot* is 'the bull of the camp'. He has no defined status or authority but enjoys considerable prestige through a combination of factors - ownership of cattle, age, ritual powers, many children and relatives, personal ability and tact, and so forth. His prestige makes his personal actions and decisions influential so that, when he decides to move his homestead, others will naturally follow suit.

Districts and villages have no headmen or councils. There is not even a war leader except that, in a fight, the warriors automatically follow their most notable and brave fighters. There is thus an absence of legal institutions, official leadership and organised political activity. Evans-Pritchard writes: "their state is an acephalous kinship state...." and it is the kinship structure, in conjunction with territorial segmentation, which forms the basis of Nuer political organisation.(1) 621

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NUER TRIBAL SEGMENTS AND THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

There are at least 20 clans in Nuerland, together with a number of small lineages of Dinka origin. A Nuer clan is an exogamous group of agnates who trace their descent from a common ancestor. The clans are segmented into lineages and each lineage is further segmented. Thus, a clan is segmented into maximal lineages, the maximal lineages are segmented into major lineages, the major lineages into minor lineages and minor lineages into minimal lineages. A minimal lineage, in the case of the Nuer, consists of a descent group deriving from a great-grandfather or great-great-grandfather. Clans and lineages are distinguished by separate names, ritual symbols and honorific titles. 614 613

The political and lineage groups are not identical but there is a certain correspondence. Often they bear the same name; for example, Gaawar is the name of a tribal area, of the tribesmen inhabiting it and also of the most powerful clan in it. Like the tribe, the Nuer clan has many of the characteristics accompanying segmentation. Lineages are distinct groups only in relation to one another and there is fusion of collateral 613 [614]

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(1) Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, 1940, p.181.

613 lineages of the same branch in relation to a collateral branch.(1)

Although Nuer lineages are not corporate, localised communities,
621 they are frequently associated with territorial units.(2) Every Nuer
613 village is associated with a lineage, though the members of it may form only a small part of the population. The village community is identified with, and called by the name of, the lineage which forms the agnatic core to which the other families and lineages are aggregated. For everyday purposes the position of this dominant lineage does not appear to be very different from that of the other lineages in the community. It is only in connection with certain ritual matters and in reference to rules of exogamy, that lineages are completely autonomous groups and become clearly differentiated from each other. Lineages function within, and as part of, local communities of all sizes, from the village to the tribe.

THE DOMINANT LINEAGES AND
STRANGER LINEAGES

613 When a tribal section is called after a lineage it does not follow that all the members of the lineage live there, though the majority may do so. It merely means that the lineage is a dominant one, the nucleus of the community, although large stranger lineages are often included in the area.

Migration, quarrels, intermarriage and so forth, have caused a dispersion of lineages. If, for some reason, a man or a group of brothers leave their village, they may go and live at the village of a married sister. Here they are respected as *jiciengthu* (in-laws) and their children are accepted as *gaat nar* (children of the mother's brother). The people they join are to them *cieng conyoar* - 'the people of my sister's husband', and *gaat nyal* - children of a female agnate. Except for ceremonial purposes, they will enter into close relationships with the dominant lineage of the community. However closely associated lineages may become, a lineage never merges into a different clan, for there are always certain ritual observances which cannot be shared; and only a certain amount of inter-marriage may occur, for otherwise the incest rules would be violated. A lineage can only merge with a collateral lineage of the same clan.

614 The close association between lineages and territorial segments,
613 which constitutes the political importance of the clan system, is seen in the correspondence between the segments of a dominant clan and the tribal or territorial segments.(3) A certain tribe has a dominant clan associated with it. The maximal lineage of the clan corresponds to the primary sections of the clan; the major lineages correspond to the secondary sections, the minor lineages to the tertiary sections and the minimal lineages are associated with the villages comprising the tertiary sections (see above p.140). The dominant clan is therefore a framework on which the political system of the tribe is built up through a complex series of kinship links.(4)

(1) See Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, 1940, pp.192-3, for full discussion of the segmentation of lineages and underlying structural principles.
(2) Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, 1940, p.203.
(3) *Ibid.*, pp.211-12. (4) *Ibid.*, pp.203-12 for further details.

DIFFERENTIATION OF STATUS AMONG THE NUER

There are three categories in a Nuer tribe: *diel*, *rul* and *jaang*. 614

The dominant clan is *diel* and members of other clans settling after the establishment of the dominant lineage are *rul* (strangers). Not every member of a clan lives in a tribe where his clan has a superior status; a man is a *dil* (an aristocrat) only in the tribe in which his clan is dominant, for the status of *diel* derives from residence on land owned by the clan. Prestige, not authority or any particular power, is attached to the *diel*; they are owners of the land, the village sites and pastures. Strangers live on the land through some link with, and the recognition of, the true owners. 554

A *rul* (stranger) is a Nuer who is not a *dil* in the tribe in which he lives. He may be influential, highly respected and even a tut (bull), though not belonging to the aristocratic clan. He may, indeed, group round him an entire village community in spite of the presence of several tribal aristocrats in the same village; in this respect personality and influence may count for more in everyday local affairs than a particular lineage affiliation.(1) In fact, in the everyday life of a village community, the only socially significant difference between aristocrats and strangers is in the assessment of blood cattle, and this is only found among the Jikany tribes. 554 609

'Tribal bulls', on the other hand, belonging to a lineage of the dominant clan of a tribe, are far more important in the political system than the *rul* bulls, for they are centres of clusters of kin and are also agnates, each having in relation to the others a structural position in the lineage system of the dominant clan.(2) 613 554

A Dinka adopted into a joint family is a *jaang* to the people of the family. To people outside the family he is a member of it and his status is not differentiated; he has all the rights and obligations of other members. Only the assessment of his value in blood cattle differentiates him from the Nuer. 597

Strangers may be attached to the dominant clan by adoption or by marriage. [614]

Kinship values are the strongest sentiments and norms in Nuer society, and all social interrelations tend to be expressed in kinship idioms. Since there are no headmen or councils or any of the usual forms of government, it seems that kinship values, combined with the position of the dominant lineage and its linked stranger lineages, are the originising agencies and the means of unity in each community. 602 621

The political system of the Nuer is constituted by the relations between territorial segments in the tribal system; cohesion and organisation are achieved through the association of the lineage system with the territorial units. The lines of cleavage tend to coincide, for lineages are 621 613 619

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(1) Evans-Pritchard, *Kinship and Local Community among the Nuer*, 1950, p.370.
(2) Ibid., p.[illegible].

exchange it, or give it to one of their affines. When I asked whether 776×
this might not compromise the daughter or sister to whose husband 613
it was given I was told: 'They have gone over to another lineage [773]
(*gol*), they are not your people any longer.' It is related—the theme of the story is widely distributed among the Nilotic peoples—that a man of the lineage went to bathe in a stream and placed his bead-strung girdle on the bank, where a *ma reng* cow came and looked at it while he was bathing. The man saw the cow near his girdle, but he did not see a kite swoop down and carry the girdle away in its claws; so when he discovered that it had disappeared he thought that the cow had eaten it, and he killed the animal and examined the contents of its stomachs in vain. Later someone found the girdle a long way off, where the kite had dropped it, and brought it to its owner, who was then sorry that he had killed the cow. Moreover, the owner of the cow uttered a conditional curse (*biit*) against him, saying that the spirit of cattle with *ma reng* markings would dog his footsteps and would kill him and his descendants were they ever again to drink the milk of cattle with *ma reng* markings, use their dung for fires, or clean their teeth with the ashes of their burnt dung.

The Gaagwong lineage of the Gaatgankiir clan respect cattle with *ma cuany* markings—an incongruous patch of colour in the middle of one of the common markings. The Jimem, or at any rate one of their lineages, the Jiruet, said to be of Dinka origin, also respect *ma cuany* cattle, and they are respected by all monorchids, to whom all cattle with this peculiarity are thought to be dangerous. This Jimem lineage also respect monorchids, both human or animal, and they have *mut tora*, spear of monorchid, for their spear-name.

The Jikul clan respect the hides of cattle. As far as I am aware, 776×
they sleep on them as do other Nuer, but it is said that they refrain 614●
from beating a hide to get the ashes of their dung fires off it, as
other Nuer do, and shake it instead. The ancestor of this clan is [773]
believed to have fallen from the sky, wrapped in a fawn-coloured ox-skin, into a pool of water. Hence their spear-name is *mut kuli*, the spear of the hide, and their honorific titles are *gat* and *nya yan*, son and daughter of fawn-coloured, and *nya kuli*, daughter of hide. I have heard it said that a man of this clan will not eat heads of cattle and will not accept compensation in cattle for adultery with his wife. I was also told that should a man of the

×776 clan beat an ox-hide his next child might be born without teeth
● 614 in the gums of the upper jaw as a cow is without upper incisors.
A further observance said to obtain in the clan is that their
women may not cross a marshy shallow without first kicking
some water out of it. People say that the Jikul are *jikwoth*, God's
[721] people, in that they are an augury in war, for if a man on the side
they are supporting in a fight should be the first to be wounded
their party knows that it will be defeated and should retire, whereas
if a man of the other side is the first to be wounded they know
by this that they will be victorious and should press forward.
[585] When a girl of the clan is married a cow of her bridewealth goes
to the hide-spirit, and if she is later divorced this cow remains with
[586] her parents as indemnity for the hides the people sat on during
the marriage negotiations. Mr. B. A. Lewis tells me that when he
suggested holding a dance in a village mostly occupied by a Jikul
lineage in the Lak tribe he was asked to make a present to the
chief man of the community in compensation for the beating of
the tympanum of the drum.

×776 The Jikoi clan respect rafters (*koi*) and rope used in the building
614 of byres and huts. They use them for building but they will
not use those of an old habitation for fuel. It is related that in
773 ancient times men of this clan tried to build a byre which would
reach to the clouds. Other people said that this could not be done
because the clouds were far away, and there was much argument
on the matter during the building. God in the sky heard the
argument and was angered at the presumption of those who
wanted to build a byre to reach the heavens, and he sent down
lightning and destroyed the builders.

×776 I have mentioned all Nuer totems of which I have certain knowledge
177 and I now say a few words about totemistic relationships
before discussing some of the chief features of Nuer totemism
262 and its significance for an understanding of their conception of
Spirit. In Nuerland one often finds that individuals respect classes
of things not respected by other members of their lineages or even
by their close kin. There are people, probably all or mostly of
Dinka origin, who refrain from eating certain parts of beasts:
entrails, heart, liver, kidneys, spleen, head, and hooves. In those
few cases I have inquired into, the association was said to have
come about through a misfortune connected with the parts abstained
from. For example, people who abstain from eating hearts

411 782 for the whole person.[1] It is for this reason that a spear must be carried during the invocation and not in order to slay the animal at the end of it. Other invocations by other men may follow before that is done, and the quick dramatic thrust into its heart which concludes the rite may be made by anyone, and not necessarily by a man who has made an invocation or by a spear used in the invocation.

411 782 614 But we have also to note that on many sacrificial occasions—those of a collective kind held in structural situations—when a man makes an invocation he does so as the representative of his clan (where 'clan' is used in this context 'clan or lineage' is to be understood—a man may be speaking in reference to his maximal lineage). He identifies himself with the clan by identifying his spear with that of the ancestor of the clan. It is his own spear which he brandishes but the name of the spear he shouts out as he does so is that of the spear of the ancestor of the clan, the clan spear-name. This is characteristic of sacrifices of the collective type, and it is towards them that the discussion is now directed.

[552] Each of the Nuer clans has a spear-name and sometimes a large lineage of a clan has a secondary name which is different from that of another lineage of the same clan. This spear-name is shouted out by a representative of the clan while he brandishes a spear in his right hand, in war, at weddings, and on other public occasions when the clan as a whole is concerned—ideally, that is, and never actively and corporately. It is especially shouted out as an exordium to sacrificial invocations on occasions of collective significance (pp. 288–9). It is '*mut gwara*', 'the spear of our fathers'. On such of these occasions as require the services of a leopard-skin priest he calls out the spear-name '*mut Geaka*', 'spear of Gee', a spear-name which combines the representation of the priestly office with that of the Nuer as a whole.

It is essential to note that, with two exceptions, no actual spears of the ancestors of the clans exist, and it is not held by Nuer that they ever did exist, except in the sense that the ancestors had their own spears. The virtue is in the idea of 'the spear of our fathers', not in any material clan relic. Consequently, in invocations any spear will serve the purpose of the rite and represent that of the

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[1] Among the Shilluk the officiant rubs his spear on the back of the victim, as the Nuer places his right hand on its back (D. S. Oyler, *Sudan Notes and Records*, 1920, p. 298).

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

ancestor of the clan and hence symbolize the clan as a whole. Any 411
spear will do, but, for the reason I have stated, there must be a 782
spear; and when Nuer sitting in my tent recounted to me what is 614
said in invocations they gestured with their right hands as though they held spears in them, for they found it difficult to speak the words without making the gestures, just as in recounting what is said in prayers (*pal*) they found it difficult to do so without moving outstretched hands up and down.

Published literature on the Nuer records information about 411
only two actual spears of clans. The one about which we are told 614
most is the spear, called *wiu*, of the Gaatgankir clan, who are [177]
regarded by all, including themselves, as being of Dinka origin; and the spear is a Dinka, and not a Nuer, type of spear. A mysterious origin and power are attributed to it. It is believed to have been held by Kir, the ancestor of the clan, when he was cut out of the gourd in which he was found, and it is also associated with the air-spirit *wiu*, which is regarded as being in some sense immanent in it. When I was in Nuerland it was in the charge of a family of leopard-skin priests of the Tar lineage of the eastern Gaajak tribe. I did not myself see it, but it has been described by Mr. H. C. Jackson, who saw it in 1922 near the Pibor river.[1] He records that it was decorated with cowrie shells and beads and was housed in a special grass hut where visitors treated it with great deference. He says that it was prayed and sacrificed to, especially before raids on the Dinka and Burun peoples;[2] that if two sections of the Nuer wished to engage in fighting among themselves it would be placed between them to prevent an engagement; and that oaths were taken on it. I was told that only old people would look upon it. The importance of this spear to our discussion of clan spear-names is that, as I will explain later, all such spear-names have an

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[1] H. C. Jackson, op. cit., pp. 168 and 179-81.

[2] We are probably to understand, in view of Nuer religious conceptions in general, that Nuer respect (*thek*) the spear and pray and sacrifice to the spirit *wiu*, which is in the sky as well as in the spear. Mr. R. T. Johnston reached the same conclusion with regard to a similar spear among the Bor Dinka. He observes that 'the spear by itself, except by association and as a symbol, is not sacred' (op. cit., p. 127). Dr. Lienhardt tells me that when the Government, with remarkable lack of imagination, confiscated and removed this spear lest it should become a focus of opposition to the administration the Dinkas' faith was in no way lessened. The only result was that the spirit associated with the spear, no longer having a recognized material symbol in a single place, manifested itself all over the tribal territory, defying any further intervention.

411 association with the spirit *wiu* through the further association of
614 this spirit with lightning and hence with the idea of striking, so
● that the spear *wiu*, perhaps also because it has a material existence,
has become the prototype of clan 'spears'. Of the other spear, that
of the Thiang clan and tribe, who occupy a territory I have not
myself visited, we are told by Mr. B. A. Lewis only in whose possession
it is and that it is called *mut bah thiang*.[1] Dr. P. P. Howell,
who gives its name as *mut bar thiang*, tells me that he has not seen
it but Nuer have described it to him as being nearly worn through
with much polishing. It is unknown whether any cultic practices
like those I have mentioned above are connected with it.

411 Apart from the Gaatgankir and the Thiang spears the spear-
614 symbols of the Nuer clans and lineages are only names. Through
613 the association of a tribal community with the clan dominant in
552 it the spear-name of this clan is shouted out in invocations when
the whole tribe goes to war but, except in this context, which I
discuss below, in which a political group is merged conceptually
with a clan or lineage, it is only called out in reference to a descent
group as an exclusive group. Thus, when I asked a Wot tribesman
whether his tribe had a tribal spear he replied: 'We have many
spears. One lineage (*gol*) has one spear, another lineage has another
spear, a third lineage has a different spear, and so on.' By 'spear'
he meant a spear-name, not an actual spear. Consequently, if two
[572] persons have the same spear-name there is likelihood of agnatic
relationship, and spear-names are therefore often spoken of in
connexion with proposed marriages. One hears Nuer saying in
discussions about the permissibility of a proposed marriage 'what
about their spears?', 'they have the same spear, they cannot
marry', or 'their spear is different to ours, we can marry their
daughter'.[2] At a wedding the masters of ceremonies on the bride's
[585] side and on the bridegroom's side, each acting as representative
411 of his clan, begin their formal announcements that the marriage
614 negotiations have reached a successful conclusion (*twoc ghok*)
613 by shouting out their clan spear-names. The spear-name is also
597 shouted out by the master of ceremonies as the opening words of
552 the sacrificial invocation he makes when a Dinka boy is adopted

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[1] B. A. Lewis, op. cit., p. 82.

[2] Should the two clans have the same spear-name this is not always a bar to the union, for secondary spear-names may indicate that they belong to different clans, or other circumstances may be taken into consideration.

into the lineage of the man who has given him domicile, the expression for adopting being either *lath buthni*, to be given shares (in sacrificial meats) and hence to be given agnation, or *lath muot*, to be given a spear (-name), and hence to be made a member of the clan. He also shouts it out in sacrificial invocations at mortuary ceremonies, at settlement of blood-feuds, at initiations, and on other occasions which concern the whole clan (p. 288). When, as mentioned above, clan and tribe are identified politically in war and raiding a representative of the dominant clan of the tribe brandishes a spear and calls out the spear-name of his clan on behalf of the whole tribe. This man, called *ngul*,[1] is usually, perhaps always, a leading man of the senior lineage of the dominant clan, that descended from the eldest son of the ancestor of the clan. Thus in the Lou tribe this rite is performed by a man of the Gaaliek lineage of the Jinaca clan. Likewise the Tar lineage who have charge of the *wiu* spear are descendants of Thiang, the eldest son of the founder of the clan; and the Thiang clan who own the *thiang* spear are descended from Thiang, the eldest son of Gee.

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I cannot always explain the meaning of these spear-names or even translate them, and Nuer themselves cannot always say for certain what they mean, for they arose in ancient days. It is clear, however, that they are charged with symbols expressing the unity and continuity of clans and lineages. I give a few examples, choosing those in which the meaning is more or less evident. The Jiruet lineage have *muot tora*, spear of the monorchid. This lineage respects monorchids, whether they be man or beast. The Gaatiek clan have *muot yier*, spear of the stream, because their ancestor came out of a stream. The Gaatnaca clan have *muot ghama*, spear of the thigh. This seems to refer to the loins of the ancestor from whom they sprang. The Gaaliek lineage of this clan have the secondary spear-name *muot tang*, spear of the spear-shaft, because the *ngul*, whom I have referred to above, of the Lou tribe is of this lineage. He uses a spear-shaft in war ritual. The Gaatleak clan have *muot leak*, the word *leak* being simply, it would seem, taken from the clan name itself. Many leopard-skin priests are members

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[1] He is also called *ngul ghok*, *ngul* of cattle, an expression which probably refers to the taking of enemy cattle on raids, and *gwan muot*, possessor of the spear. As he may break a spear-shaft in two and throw the pieces in the direction of the enemy he is further known as *gwan tang*, possessor of the spear-shaft. I was told that he may also invoke God for success in hunting in time of famine.

411 of this clan and, as I have explained, they use *mut Geaka*, spear
614 of Gee, as an alternative expression. The Thiang lineage have a
613 secondary spear-name *mut Thiang*, spear of Thiang, which is the
552 name of their ancestor.

When a man calls out his clan spear-name he often does so with embellishments, which are further symbolical representations of the clan. They refer to its ancestor, its spirits, its totems, its ghosts, its cattle, or its origin and traditions. Thus a Gaatgankir clansman in making invocations adds to *mut wiu* such expressions as *mut kwe*, *mut jangemo me coali Kir*, and *mut gwara*. *Kwe* is the fish-eagle and also a colour distribution of cattle. The shining of the spear is likened to the white face of the fish-eagle against its black body and to the white splash on the head of a dark coloured cow or ox. *Jaangemo me coali Kir* means 'that Dinka who is called Kir' and refers to the Dinka origin of the clan. *Mut gwara* means 'spear of our fathers'. The spear in the hand of the speaker, the spear *wiu*, the spear used to cut open the gourd in which the ancestor was found, and the spirit *wiu* all seem to be fused in the representation. In a similar manner the Gaawar clan may add to their spear-name *mut wang*, spear of the eye (I think), such expressions as *mut nhial*, *mut puara*, and *mut kwoth nyota*. I do not know why the spear is called 'spear of the eye' (if that is the right translation). *Nhial* is the firmament and *puar* is a cloud. Their ancestor fell from the sky and the clan is therefore associated with sky, clouds, and rain. When he fell he had in his hand a sprig of the *nyuot* tree, a tree associated with rain. Hence the *kwoth nyota*, the spirit of the *nyuot* tree.

Thus the spear-name is either that of the ancestor of the lineage or clan or in some way signifies him, and the elaborations of it, such as by reference to a spirit or a totem, are also just different ways of denoting the lineage or clan as a whole; for the name of the ancestor stands for the whole clan, both here and elsewhere. We have noted earlier (p. 169) how in myths a lineage is personified for the purpose of the action of the story, the name of the lineage or of its tribal territory being used to indicate its ancestor. Nuer sometimes even insert the name of a lineage into a genealogy as its founder, though the form of the word shows that it is the name of a group and not of a person; or they give the founder a composite name, appending the name of the lineage to the personal name, for example, Nyang Gaaliek, Nyang being the name of the person and Gaaliek the name of the lineage of his descendents, name of the person and Gaalick the name of the lineage of his descendants.

I have attempted to show that the spear brandished in sacrificial 411
invocations stands for the person and that when this person speaks 782
as a representative and on behalf of the clan, as he does in collec- 614
tive sacrifices, it stands for the clan. In the one case it is the right 826
hand (vitality) of the individual and in the other the right hand 721
(vitality) of the ancestor (the clan) which is emphasized. In the second case the spear is closely associated with the idea of the clan as a battle host.

When we ask why clans should be symbolized by a spear, or rather by the idea of a spear contained in a spear-name, and not by something else, we cannot give an acceptable answer in terms of the scarcity, and therefore high value, of iron nor in terms of simple utility. The symbol is not *yieth* or *you*, iron.[1] Nor is it the *bidh*, the fishing-spear, which is perhaps even more essential for Nuer than the fighting-spear, for they have no substitute for it and could not survive without a good supply of fish. It is the *mut*, the iron fighting-spear. The fact that the wood, horn, and bone pointed spears do not figure as symbols might suggest that it is because it is made of iron, which lasts longer and makes a more efficient weapon, that the *mut* is the symbol of clans, but it appears to me to be a more satisfactory explanation that it is because the *mut* not only stands for the right hand and hence vitality but is also the symbol of going to war and of making sacrifice.

The word *mut*, besides meaning a fighting-spear, has a general 411
sense of taking part in war and raiding: '*ce Nath wa mut*', 'the 721
Nuer went raiding'; '*ce mut nang Jaang*', 'war was taken (by the 613
Nuer) to the Dinka'. The idea expressed by the word *mut* in these 614
examples is not so much the general idea of war and raiding as the idea of a collectivity, the clan or lineage in its political or tribal embodiment, going to war or going on a raid. Hence Father Kiggen correctly translates '*te ke mud mediid*' (his spelling) as 'they have a big army'.[2] By synecdoche 'spear' stands for 'battle host'.

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[1] It is true that Nuer lick any metal in taking an oath (p. 297), but I regard this as being a derivation from licking a spear, for which any metal stands as a substitute, in the same way as the honorific titles of the Gaatgankir clan, son, and daughter, of iron, derive from the *wiu* spear. The words *yieth*, metal, and *yiedh*, to spear or to stab, are surely connected.

[2] J. Kiggen, op. cit., p. 206. One may ask, in the light of this discussion about

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
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SPEAR SYMBOLISM

552 It is, I believe, in some such sense of the clan militant that we
411 should interpret the spear symbolism of the clans. Nuer always
● 614 speak of 'spear' where I have used the expression 'spear-name'.
721 However, not only are there in almost all cases no actual spears, but it is not even the idea of any particular spear that they have in mind. What they have in mind is the clan as a whole for which the spear stands as a symbol not just as a spear but as representing the collective strength of the clan in its most conspicuous corporate activity, for clans and lineages are most easily and distinctly thought of as collectivities—through their identification with tribes and tribal segments—in relation to war. That the representation is of the clan as a battle host is shown by the Nuer statement about their clan spears that they only exist in the sense that 'they are in the mouths of men when they go to battle'. Two remarks made by Nuer give further support to an interpretation along these lines. One man said of all clan spears that '*tuokdien e wiu*', 'their origin is *wiu*', and that *wiu* is the *kwoth*, spirit, of all clan spears. There was some discussion about this remark among Nuer present, and I gathered from it that all clan spears in this wide and symbolic sense of the word *mut* as the battle host signify the clan as a social group in relation to God in the conception of him as Lord of Hosts. The man could not have meant that other clan spears were derived or copied from the spear *wiu*. That would have made no sense, both because there are no actual spears and also because the Gaatgankir clan who own the spear *wiu* are regarded by everybody as a Dinka clan of later origin than the true Nuer clans. That a spiritual conception of *wiu* was meant is further evident from a remark made to me by another Nuer, a man of exceptional ability, that when the Gaatgankir clan reach ten generations from their ancestor Kir—when they have grown up, so to speak—they will doubtless cease to respect (*thek*) the

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the west, why it is that the title of spiritual leaders in Dinkaland is taken from the fishing-spear (*bith*) instead of from the fighting-spear. An explanation might be put forward in terms of the analysis I have presented. Whereas among the Nuer the fighting-spear is the symbol of the clan because what is being symbolized is exclusiveness and opposition, among the Dinka the fishing-spear is the symbol of spiritual leadership because what is being symbolized is inclusiveness and unity. This is a guess but it receives some support from the fact that among the Nuer, at any rate in western Nuerland, when a leopard-skin priest goes to settle a feud he is accompanied by a kinsman called the *gwan bieth*, the master of the fishing-spear, which is the title of the Dinka spiritual leaders. However, this may be a loan from the Dinka.

spear *wiu*, as they do at present, and will respect (the word is here 552
used to balance the statement and not literally) only its name. As 411
we should put it, they will not then feel the need for a material 614●
symbol of the spiritual relationship, and a verbal or ideational 721
symbol will suffice. The association of clan spears with the spirit
wiu is clear to us when we recall that the spirit is also associated
with lightning with which, in this hypostasis, God strikes as man
strikes with the spear.[3]

In invocations in which clans are involved as such God is 552
appealed to, as I have explained earlier, in some refraction by 411
which he is figured as their patron. This is the '*kwoth gwara*', 'the 782
God of our fathers'. It is on such occasions also that the spear-name 614
of the clan is shouted out as an exordium to the invocation. This
is the '*mut gwara*', 'the spear of our fathers'. I would suggest that
we have here in the spear-name a symbolic representation of the
clan in its relation to God. God is invoked in relation to the clan
through the spear of the ancestor held in imagination in the hand
of one of his descendants.

If this interpretation is right, then in those sacrifices in which the clan as a whole is concerned the calling out of the clan spear-name by the officiant identifies the whole clan with the intention of the sacrifice as spoken in the invocation. The sacrificial spear in his hand becomes through the exordium the clan sacrificial spear through which in symbol the whole clan offers up the victim to God. The officiant in such sacrifices must therefore be a representative of the clan, what the Nuer call a *gwan buthni*; whereas in personal and piacular sacrifices, in which appeal is made on behalf of an individual or a number of individuals, anyone can officiate and the officiant is usually a senior member of the family or kin of the sacrificer. The intention, and therefore character, of the sacrificial act is different in the two cases. In the first it is of the nature of a validation, in the second of the nature of a *piaculum*; though in some situations there may be a broad overlap. Religion has always these two sides, the one concerned chiefly with the social life and the other with the relation of the individual soul to its God.

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[3] Nuer, however, use for God striking a man with lightning the verbs *mar*, to strike, and *pim*, to strike in the sense of 'to hit' or 'to punch', and not *jioth*, to strike in the sense of to thrust or to stab.

23/ their wearing, incapable of use, and that they also render useless
88/ the left horns of their favourite oxen by deforming them.f

Human thought and expression are inevitably constructed out of man's experience of the world around him. There is nothing that should surprise us in Nuer speaking metaphorically of boys by the same word (*ruath*) as they use for young bulls and for the male young of other animals, and, by contrast, of men by the same word (*tut*) as they use for adult bulls and adult males of other animal species. It is natural—it would be remarkable were it not so—that Nuer use cattle metaphors in speech and gesture. Nevertheless, the evidence, some of which I have presented, suggests that there is more in it than that. Whether Professor Seligman's psychological use of the word 'identification' is correct is a question that lies outside my own competence and the scope of this book, but it cannot be denied that there is a moral identification, a participation imposed on the individual by his culture and inextricably bound up with religious values. When henceforward I speak of identification it is to be understood in this sense.

f [See p. 235, cat. 116, —Analyst]

II

23/ We have noted that there is a personal side and a collective side
782 to Nuer religion and that we may speak of personal and collective
615 types of sacrifice. We have noted also that in the collective type the
● 614 officiant represents the whole clan, that the spear he holds in his hands is that of the ancestor of the clan, and that he invokes God as the God who created his ancestor and the God of his fathers. We have further noted that the sacrificial victim, although in fact it is an ox or a surrogate for an ox, is not spoken of as *thak*, ox, but as *yang*, cow, a general term referring to any bovine beast, with a plural form *ghok*, meaning 'cattle'. This suggests that the victim embodies the general idea of the equivalence of cattle and men in the sacrificial act, and there is certainly what we may speak of as a collective identification of clans and lineages with their herds. This is expressed in the honorific titles of clans and lineages. We have been discussing hitherto the equation of man with ox. These titles introduce us to the idea of an enduring relationship between a social group and its ancestral herd.

On the day when, by the cutting of lines on his forehead, a boy

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

On the day when, by the cutting of lines on his forehead, a boy

881 becomes a man there is much rejoicing of his kinsfolk, and especially of his father and paternal kin. In talking to Nuer about this day they have impressed on me that what is uppermost in the minds of the older men, particularly at the initiation of an eldest son, is that the continuity of the family and lineage is now assured. Initiation is the threshold to marriage and the birth of sons who will remember their forebears; for as soon as the period of healing and seclusion is over the initiates embark on a full sex life leading to courtship, marriage, and begetting. An initiate is part of a lineage and clan and his initiation is seen in terms of its collective life. His new relationship with the cattle is then not only a personal one, important though that is, but the personal relationship is incorporated in a more general lineage one.

231 613 ●614 Nuer conceive of the ancestor of a clan, and likewise the ancestors of its component lineages, as having possessed a herd, the descendants of which have had, and continue to have, though distributed among different families, a constant relationship with the descendants of their original owners and are still thought of as one herd. This ancestral herd is a fiction, for the cattle are being constantly dispersed and replaced by others at marriages, but conceptually it is an enduring collectivity. There is ideally a constant attachment, the clan and its herd forming a joint community down the generations, so much so that a common, perhaps the commonest, explanation of a division in the clan is the fighting of bulls of the ancestors of the divided parts. The social cleavage is represented in tradition as a cleavage in the herd.

231 613 614 653 176 The unity of clans and lineages is symbolized in the names of the ancestral spears, which we have already discussed,& and in honorific titles, chiefly derived from the names of cows. In both cases we are dealing with ideas and not actual things, with the idea of a clan spear handed down as an heirloom and with the idea of the present herds of the members of a clan being descended from the ancestral herd. Nuer say that '*mut kene paak jalke kel*', 'the spear and the honorific title go together'. If a man has a certain clan spear he must have one or more honorific titles which go with it. Both have come down together from *tuok nath*, the beginnings of the Nuer. The *paak*, a word found with the same meaning in some of the other Nilotic languages, may be described as an honorific title used as a mode of salutation or address. It is commonly used on ceremonial occasions, as on formal visits, at dances,

& [See pp. 246-47, cds 179/180 — Analyst]

and at marriage and initiation ceremonies. Otherwise it is mostly 231
a complimentary usage which expresses a formal relationship of 613
reserve, as between a husband's mother and her son's wife, and 614 •
then it is chiefly a woman's mode of address. 553
196

The title consists of *gat*, son (of), or *nya*, daughter (of), followed by a word which usually refers to a cow said to be that on whose milk the ancestor of the clan or lineage was nurtured in infancy, though it may refer to the place where the clan or lineage is said to have originated, or to some object connected with its ancestor, or to its totem. Nuer say that clans either *'ba paak ka kwi yangdien'*, 'are saluted by reference to their cow' or *'ba paak ka kwi ciengdien'*, 'are saluted by reference to their (original) village site', but since the salutation generally refers to a cow the expressions *'paak'*, 'honorific salutation', and *'paakene yang'*, 'honorific salutation of cow', are synonyms. The words are often exceedingly difficult to translate, or even to discover the meaning of, especially when they relate to cows, for here the Nuer language proliferates symbolism in luxuriant elaborations of fancy; and representations of ancestral cow, ancestral home, totem, and totemic spirit, are sometimes fused in the titles, which are built out of a number of residues all of which derive from and express lineage values. I have listed and discussed some of these honorific titles elsewhere,[1] and there is no need here for a detailed consideration of them. We have only to note the central place the idea of a cow has in them, the cow standing for the herd and hence also for the lineage of its masters.

It need not surprise us that it is a cow that is referred to and 231
not an ox or bull. It would be inappropriate to refer to an ox since, 613
as I understand the matter, the whole point of using a symbol 553
from the herds is to express in a single representation the idea of 196
the unity of a lineage and its cattle, the cattle which sustain the lineage by their milk (the cow suckles the ancestor) and by constant calving provide them with bridewealth for marriages whereby sons are born and the lineage continued, and with a means of maintaining communication with Spirit and ghosts. Male animals do not answer the requirements of the symbolism. The great majority of the bulls are castrated, and, if not later disposed of in marriage, those which survive murrains are sacrificed; and the animals which are left entire are not thought of as being, like the

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[1] 'The Nuer: Tribe and Clan', *Sudan Notes and Records*, 1934, pp. 13-29.

CHAPTER XII

PRIESTS AND PROPHETS

I

It has been noted that women do not make sacrifice and that 782
though any man can make it only senior men who are fathers of families, 'bulls' as the Nuer call them, do so. Personal sacrifices are usually, as in most cases of sickness, performed by the head of the family or some senior kinsman and neighbour, but sacrifices which have more than domestic import and are thought of as involving a whole lineage or clan—collective sacrifices—have to be performed by a person called *gwan buthni*, whom I have spoken of as the master of ceremonies.

The verb *buth* means 'to share', and since collateral lineages of 613
a clan and also clans with common ancestry may claim portions 614
of the flesh of sacrificial victims at each other's collective sacrifices, 727
there is said to be *buth* between them. They are to one another 782
jibuthni, people who share. The word is also used when speaking of the adoption of a captured Dinka into his captor's lineage. He is said to be *lath buthni*, given shares. A sacrifice is made and in the invocation at it the guardian spirit of the lineage is asked to receive the Dinka into its care and the ghosts of the ancestors are informed of what is being done. The Dinka is smeared with the victim's chyme. He now counts as a member of his captor's lineage and has a right to partake of the meats of its sacrifices and also to claim a portion of the meat at sacrifices by any other lineage to which this lineage stands in a *buth* relationship. *Buth* has consequently the further meaning of agnation. *Jibuthni* are agnates. *Lath buthni* is to be given agnation. Agnates are people who share in the flesh of sacrifices.

Buth relationship is stated also in terms of the division of 613
elephant tusks or of cattle exchanged for them. When hunters 614
kill an elephant the right tusk goes to the *koc*, the man who first 224
speared it, and the left tusk to the *gam*, the man who speared it [201]
next. The tusks are cut into portions to be used as armlets—one of the most precious of Nuer possessions—or are exchanged for

613 cattle, and the portions of ivory or the cattle are divided among
•614 those relatives of the spearsmen who receive cattle of bridewealth
224 and bloodwealth and the flesh of sacrifices. Those standing in a *buth* relationship to the spearsmen also have rights in the tusks. This means in practice that a section of the tusk, or its equivalent in cattle, goes to the particular *thok mac*, minimal lineage, of the spearsman's clan to which the *gwan buthni*, master of ceremonies, of his family belongs, and it is this man who gets it.[1]

782 Each family has its master of ceremonies, who is a member of
a lineage collateral to that of its head and therefore one of his
613 distant agnatic kinsmen. A son takes his father's place in this
593 service. The same man may act on behalf of the heads of several families of the same minimal lineage, and one of his close agnatic kin may act in his stead, since he carries out his functions not as an individual but as representative of a group. The office is not necessarily reciprocal, for a man may act as master of ceremonies to a family of one collateral lineage and have as master of ceremonies to his own family a man of a different collateral lineage. Also, a family may have more than one master of ceremonies, the second belonging to a different collateral lineage from the first. Moreover, it would seem that if one of the persons who usually acts in this capacity is not available his place may be taken by any distant kinsman who can be held to represent him. Nuer are very latitudinarian in such matters; but the point we have to note is that on certain occasions a whole clan or large lineage offers up the sacrifice, and the officiant ought then to be someone outside the family and close kin most immediately concerned who represents the interest of the wider group, which participates in the sacrifice through him.

782 A master of ceremonies functions at weddings, mortuary and
613 *colwic* ceremonies, settlements of blood-feuds, adoptions, initiations, severings of kinship to allow intermarriage or cohabitation, the building of new byres, and the division of elephant tusks. On these occasions he calls out the clan or lineage spear-name and then makes an invocation, usually prior to animal sacrifice. By calling out the spear-name he identifies the whole clan or lineage with the offering. When the victim has been killed he cuts through the scrotum (*fuak tem*), this being the commencement of the skin-

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[1] See also P. P. Howell, 'A Note on Elephants and Elephant Hunting among the Nuer', *Sudan Notes and Records*, 1945.

793 [789] injured party an excuse to accept compensation without loss of honour.

It is a matter of surprise that the Nuer priesthood should have this association with the earth and take its most common title from it. There is no cult of the earth such as we find in West Africa. Priests are not traditionally linked to a particular territory as are the 'fathers of the land', ritual agents who are such in virtue of being descendants of first settlers, among some other Nilotic peoples. Nor can a satisfactory explanation be advanced in terms of agricultural activities. Nuer do not highly esteem cultivation of crops and may be presumed to have engaged in it even less in the past when cattle were more numerous. Cattle husbandry receives more of their attention and is their absorbing interest, but it and fishing, which is also most important for them, so far as they are the object of ritual attention, are the concern of other, and less important, ritual specialists than the priest of the earth. Moreover, Nuer do not attach much importance to such ritual as he performs in connexion with the crops, and it is entirely secondary to his other functions. On the other hand, it can be seen that the association of priesthood with the earth is a representation which accords with the general idea of man being identified with the earth and God with the sky, the priest being essentially a person who sacrifices on behalf of man below to God above.

793 613 ● 614 Lineages of leopard-skin priests are found in all tribal sections, and in most parts of Nuerland they are in the category of *rul*, strangers, and not of *diel*, members of the clans which own the tribal territories. It is necessary that they should be widely spread, because their services are essential to Nuer everywhere, and it is significant that they are generally not members of lineages identified with political groups, because they have to act as peacemakers between such groups. The two best-known priestly clans, the Gaatleak and the Jimem, have no tribal territories of their own but live, as families and small lineages, in most or all territories owned by other clans. They are like Levi, divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel. Their priestly filiation goes back to Gee, the first man and the first priest, from certain of whose sons the priestly virtue (*ring*) has passed down the generations. However, although their powers are hereditary, and although all members of a priestly lineage can, therefore, act in a priestly capacity, in practice only certain families do so, and these families can function as priests wherever

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
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they happen to reside. Moreover, persons who do not belong to a 793
priestly family can become priests, transmitting their powers to 613
their children, by what the Nuer call *tetde*, by hand. This means 614
that such a man is given a leopard-skin by a priest and told to carry out priestly services. In some myths of origin of the Jikany tribes the leopard-skin was given by the ancestors of the dominant lineages to their maternal uncles that they might serve as tribal priests. The structurally opposed lineages of the clan were then in the common relationship of sisters' sons to the line of priests, which thus had a mediatory position between them.[1] A layman is still today sometimes invested with the leopard-skin and the priestly powers that go with it, and I have known a Dinka chosen for the purpose. This in itself teaches us much about the way Nuer regard their priests. Priestly duties are tiresome and ill-rewarded, but somebody has to perform them. Nuer society is very far from being a hierocracy.

The chief services a priest performs are in connexion with homi- 793
cide and the importance of his office derives from this essential 628
function. Only he can perform these services,[2] which are to release the slayer from the state of extreme danger his act has placed him in and, where circumstances are such that an active blood-feud is likely to develop if a settlement is not reached, to give the slayer sanctuary, to negotiate a settlement, to perform sacrifice to enable normal social relations to be resumed, and to rehabilitate the slayer. All these functions, in addition to having a political significance, are also essentially religious acts or derive from the priest's sacred character.

As soon as a man kills another he hastens to the nearest priest, 782
who draws the point of a fishing-spear down his right arm from 793
where it joins the shoulder and sacrifices a beast, called *yang riem*, 628
the cow of blood. Were the slayer to eat or drink before this has 783
been done it would be serious *nueer* and cause certain death, for the blood which is drawn is thought to be in some way that of the slain man which has passed into him. If there is likelihood of blood-vengeance the slayer then takes sanctuary in the home of

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[1] I recorded this fact in Sudan *Notes and Records* (1935, pp. 46-48), but I have only recently realized, in the light of Dr. Lienhardt's research among the Dinka, the significance of it.

[2] Except perhaps on such rare occasions as when a priest himself or one of his family is killed. I was told that then an elder of the aristocratic clan of the tribe might act in the priest's place.